Daily Report

Near East & South Asia

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Inter-Arab Affairs

Nuclear Weapons Symposium Opens in Damascus

JN1104172495 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1515 GMT 11 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Under the patronage of comrade Dr. Sulayman Qaddah, assistant regional secretary of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, an international symposium on preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons in the Middle East and the 12th meeting of the Arab solidarity committees, opened at the Umayyad Hall in the al-Sham Hotel in Damascus at 1000 today. Dr. Qaddah was represented by comrade Ahmad al-As'ad, member of the Central Command of the National Progressive Front and deputy chief of the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organization. [passage omitted]

Comrade al-As'ad delivered a speech at the session. At the outset, he conveyed President Hafiz al-Asad's warm struggle greetings to the participants in the seminar, as well as al-Asad's heartfelt wishes of success in arriving at decisions and recommendations that serve our pan-Arab approach and contribute to creating the appropriate circumstances to clear the Arab atmosphere and restore Arab solidarity.

Comrade al-As'ad reviewed the complicated circumstances of the Arab nation at this stage due to weakness and fragmentation, especially the rush to establish diverse relations with Israel. He said: This deteriorating situation should make us stop and think. We should also sound the alarm, sharpen our resolve, and enhance contacts to end the state of fragmentation experienced by the nation.

Comrade al-As'ad added: A pan-Arab awakening plan is the only Arab strategy that will enable us to achieve solidarity and build unity. It is the only way to face Israel's infiltration. Israel is making intensive efforts to stockpile conventional weapons and have a qualitative and strategic edge. It receives support from the United States and other nations. This situation has enabled Israel to possess and manufacture nuclear and other mass-destruction weapons. Consequently, the Arab region has been placed under Israel's nuclear threat. This also poses a serious threat to pan- Arab security. He stressed that Israel's refusal to join the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT] is the only obstacle to the NPT's universality and comprehensiveness. This also contradicts the achievement of peace, security, stability, and comprehensive development in the region, which the international community is seeking.

Comrade al-As'ad added: The Arabs have shown good faith to prevent the proliferation of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction provided that Israel complies with the NPT and its annexes. Israel, however, has refused to sign the NPT and continued to increase its arsenal of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction. In view of this reality, there is a need to urge the international community, especially the five permanent member states, and other regional and international organizations and public opinion quarters, to put pressure on Israel and force it to join the NPT and open its facilities for inspection. [passage omitted]

Israel Called To Join NPT

JN1204171695 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1550 GMT 12 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Damascus, 12 Apr (SANA)—The Arab symposium on preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons in the Middle East, which is meeting here, has urged world governments to work to eliminate the nuclear threat in the region. It emphasized that there should be no exception concerning the possession of weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear weapons.

In a final statement issued today, the Arab nongovernmental organizations expressed deep concern that the latest developments and efforts did not result in any progress toward internationalizing the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT] through the admission of countries that have not joined the treaty, especially Israel. The statement called for rejecting the pretexts Israel uses in order not to relinquish its weapons of mass destruction. [passage omitted]

Palestinian Affairs

Police Arrest 210 Hamas, Islamic Jihad Members

JN1304121195 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic 1010 GMT 13 Apr 95

[Report by Hasan Abu-Zayid in the Gaza Strip; from the "With the Midday Events" program]

[FBIS Translated Text] Palestinian police stormed several houses in the al-Shaykh Radwan and al-Shuja'iyah neighborhoods in Gaza last night and this morning. They arrested three persons from the al-Ja'bari family who are close to the Hamas [Islamic Resistance] Movement. They also arrested two persons from the Islamic Jihad Movement in the Rafah area.

Rashid Abu-Shibak, official in charge of Preventive Security in the northern Gaza Strip, held a news conference today. He said the Palestinian police granted licenses to 450 Gaza Strip residents to carry arms. These persons responded [to the Palestinian Authority] and surrendered their arms, he added.

Abu-Shibak said that among the persons permitted to carry arms is Dr. Mahmud al-Zahhar, one of Hamas Movement leaders, and some other Palestinian opposition members. He added that the Palestinian opposition members will be allowed to carry arms in order to protect themselves from the collaborators.

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In another development, approximately 210 Hamas and Islamic Jihad members have thus far been arrested. Palestinian sources said a number of these persons will be brought to trial at the beginning of last week [as heard].

The Palestinian Authority's prosecutor general said the trial of Shaykh 'Abdallah al-Shami, spokesman for the Islamic Jihad Movement, will begin on Sunday. Shaykh al-Shami was arrested approximately three months ago after his involvement in recruiting persons to carry out operations inside Israel.

'Senior' Hamas Leader Detained

TA1304135195 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1300 GMT 13 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] At noon today the Palestinian police detained one of Hamas' [Islamic Resistance Movement] senior leaders in the Gaza Strip, Sayyid Abu-Musamih, who is the editor in chief of AL-WATAN. Abu-Musamih was detained in the course of a raid that the Palestinian police conducted at the paper's offices. Gaza sources told our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem that one of the paper's editors, Ghazi Hamad, was also detained. Our correspondent was told that he was beaten in the course of his detention. Our correspondent Dani Zaqen reports that the paper's publisher, 'Imad al-Faluji, was not found in the paper's offices or at home. Our correspondents report that AL-WATAN, a Hamas organ, today published criticism about the detention of Hamas people in Gaza.

Islamic Jihad's al-Ja'bari Detained

TA1304153895 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1500 GMT 13 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The Palestinian security services today detained Islamic Jihad activist Shakir al-Ja'bari of the al-Shaja'iyah neighborhood in Gaza. Our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem has learned this from a source in the Palestinian police. Al-Ja'bari is suspected of having shot and wounded Palestinian security personnel in the course of a search of his family's house yesterday. [passage omitted]

Police Release Hamas Figures

TA1304165295 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1600 GMT 13 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] A senior Palestinian Authority [PA] source describes as ridiculous and strange statements by U.S. personages that Yasir 'Arafat accused official Israeli elements of planning the terrorist attack at Bet Lid. The source told our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem that in his last meeting in Gaza with Howard Squadron, the head of the American Jewish Congress, 'Arafat made it clear that his remarks on the subject clearly meant that it was collaborators with Israel who had aided the terrorists.

The Palestinian police released Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] leader Sayyid Abu-Musamih and Dr. Ghazi Hamad from detention a short while ago. The two were detained at noon, in a Palestinian police raid on the offices of AL-WATAN, a Hamas organ.

Islamic Jihad's al-Shaqaqi Refuses To Disarm

NC1304194595 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Arabic 1730 GMT 13 Apr 94

[Report by Muhammad Bishkar in Beirut]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] The Palestinian Authority's campaign of detention against members of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and Islamic Jihad continued today with the arrest of five more people. The Palestinian Authority has announced that it intends to put some of the detainees on trial.

Islamic Jihad Secretary General Dr. Fathi al-Shaqaqi has warned against the consequences of these campaigns and described them as provocative, adding that they are being conducted in a very ferocious manner. In a telephone interview with us today, Dr. al-Shaqaqi noted that the Palestinian Islamic movement is trying as hard as it can to observe self-restraint and not get dragged into the sedition Yasir 'Arafat pursues, in response to U.S. and Zionist pressure. But, he added, overwhelming anger is sweeping the Palestinian people and the issue is no longer one of Hamas and the Islamic Jihad. The Authority is now on one side and the people on the other, and when the people's anger explodes, no faction or movement can stop it, he added.

On the Palestinian Authority's decision to collect Resistance weapons, Dr. al-Shaqaqi said:

[Begin al-Shaqaqi recording] The Islamic movement, as represented by Hamas and the Islamic Jihad, has rejected this decision and will not abide by it under any circumstances. Our weapons will remain in our hands to defend our people and our land against the Zionist occupation, which continues to afflict all Palestine, including Gaza itself. God willing, we will never hand them over. [end recording]

Police Commander: Hamas Members Given Weapon Permits

JN1304194795 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1730 GMT 13 Apr 95

[Report by 'Adil al-Za'nun in Gaza]

[FBIS Translated Text] Rashid Abu-Shibak, deputy official in charge of the Preventive Security Agency in Gaza Strip, has stressed that the Palestinian security forces are protecting the citizens' security and interests.

In a news conference he held at the Government House today, Abu-Shibak said that 450 firearms permits have been granted for citizens from the Strip. These included, he said, permits for opposition figures, such as Dr.

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Mahmud al-Zahhar, a Hamas leading official, and for figures from the Islamic Jihad. He said these figures were given the permits after it was established that their life is at risk.

Abu-Shibak added: We have no problem giving a permit to any citizen who needs a weapon to protect his safety and security. Anyone who has social or political problems will be given a permit to possess a weapon; either a pistol or a light machine gun.

He also confirmed that the Palestinian police have recently arrested a number of collaborators with Israel.

Al-Zahhar Denies Split in Hamas

TA1404075795 Gaza AL-WATAN in Arabic 13 Apr 95 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] Gaza—A statement in the name of the Right Movement for Championing the Palestinian People's Sons has been distributed in the Gaza Strip. The statement said that the Right Movement is a breakaway faction of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement]. The odd thing is that this statement exposed itself and refuted its contents. The statement proclaimed allegiance to "brother leader and symbol Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat]" and described Hamas as "a misguided group that attacks the police and wants to sow sedition once again."

Commenting on this, Dr. Mahmud al-Zahhar said: "It is clear that this statement is fabricated. Every split has leaders. Who are its leaders?" He added: "This reflects a childish mentality on the part of some of our foes who wish Hamas to split because they have suffered from splits in their own ranks." He said that Hamas is strong and immune to splits. In conclusion, Dr. al-Zahhar said: "Ultimately, this statement does not deserve a reply."

PFLP Leader Denies Split in Ranks

TA1304135995 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 12 Apr 95 p 2

[Report by Majid al-'Aruri]

[FBIS Translated Text] Ramallah—'Abd-al-Latif Ghayth, a leader of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [PFLP] in the occupied territories, yesterday denied the existence of any split within the PFLP's ranks and stressed that no change has taken place in the PFLP's organizational structure. He said that splits have historically been expressed in factions that continue their operations, but added that this situation is not relevant to the PFLP because there are no left-wing or right-wing currents in it threatening its organizational unity.

Factions' Meeting in Gaza Produces No Agreement

TA1304173395 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 13 Apr 95 p A3

[Report by 'Amira Hess in the Gaza Strip]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] While the Palestinian police continue arresting Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] supporters, an open debate was held in Gaza yesterday, with the participation of Palestinian Authority [PA] representatives and speakers for various political movements, including Hamas, to discuss operational methods to defuse the tension. At the same time, it seemed that the gap between the representatives of Fatah and the opposition (among them were independent figures such as Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi and 'Abdallah al-Hurani) has further expanded over the past few days, and it seems that the parties encountered difficulties in finding a basis for a dialogue that would prevent an escalation.

Hisham 'Abd-al-Raziq, the Fatah representative, spoke in no uncertain about the need to stop all acts of violence against Israel that come out of the autonomous areas. "The continuation of the armed struggle will either force the PA to leave (the Gaza Strip) or cause a civil war to break out; one option is worse than the other," he said. 'Abd-al-Raziq spent 20 years in Israeli prisons after an explosive charge he had prepared exploded in his hands.

Dr. Nabil Sha'th, in charge of the PA's planning and international cooperation portfolio, was less harsh when he explained why the armed struggle should end: "Some 47 years of all types of struggles have turned our nation into a fact on the world map. Nevertheless, our previous methods did not liberate a single inch of our land nor did they return one refugee. Whatever flaws the agreement may have, the conditions for a peace process exist. It is impossible to make peace and wage war all at the same time.

"We are facing a rival that hesitates before implementing agreements it has signed. There are Labor Party members who regret the agreement. The continuation of the armed struggle, however, provides Israel with excuses to delay the implementation, and thus, we cannot prove that this is really what Israel wants. Therefore, the armed struggle must be frozen and the agreement must be put to a test, which will make the real reason for the delay clear." [passage omitted]

Speaking in a reserved tone but very direct language, Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi criticized the PA moves: "The sentences passed by the military court have crossed every barrier," he said. Some 50 days ago, 'Abd-al-Shafi topped the list of the signatories on a petition calling on 'Arafat to cancel the military court. "The PA must serve as a role model respecting the law and human rights. If it is not such a model, it must not rage at those who attack it.

Hamas member Mahmud al-Zahhar disagreed with Sha'th's remark against waging war and making peace at the same time. "All the nations ever freed through a peace accord have waged war at the same time. This was the case in Algeria and Vietnam. If there is no war, the agreements will only be concessions." Al-Zahhar complained that only the PA's security apparatuses operate, "while the civil organs work without a policy."

Two months ago, al-Zahhar said that "first, Israel said that 'Arafat must condemn terror, and he did. Now they

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say that 'Arafat must take significant steps against the opposition. Later, they will tell him that he should kill the opposition members; and then they will ask him to kill himself."

The conference was initiated by the PA Information Ministry, and the date for it was set three weeks ago. Several suggestions for a dialogue were raised yesterday. 'Abd-al-Raziq suggested that a meeting be held without preconditions. Jamal Zaqqut, a member of the Palestinian Democratic Union [FIDA] (a splinter of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine [DFLP]) and member of the PA, condemned the arrests of political activists and the court sentences and suggested that a joint leaflet be drafted to defuse the tension.

Isma'il Haniyha of Hamas, Yunus al-Jaru of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, Nihad Abu-Ghawsh of the DFLP, and PLO Executive Committee member 'Abdallah al-Hurani called for the release of those detained and for stopping the PA's moves against the opposition as a necessary precondition for holding a dialogue.

As was expected, the participants failed to reach an agreement, mainly because the opposition members feel that, no matter what they say, only one man calls the shots—Yasir 'Arafat.

Qaddumi Says Disarming Palestinians 'Cardinal Sin'

JN1304185595 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1515 GMT 13 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Tunis—Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO Political Department, has said the Syrian position on the Middle East peace process is a sound and wise position that maintains pan-Arab rights, supports joint Arab action and solidarity, and leads the region to a just, comprehensive peace.

In a statement to the Syrian Arab News Agency, SANA, in Tunis, Qaddumi said this position reflects Syria's desire to arrive at a just, comprehensive, and durable peace based on full Israeli withdrawal from all occupied Arab territories and the removal of the Israeli settlements from those territories. He said the Syrian position is based on international legitimacy, the UN Security Council resolutions, and the land-for-peace principle. He added that Syria's steadfastness is clear evidence of its adherence to its political constants and to the Arab nation's pan-Arab rights. He said Syria constantly calls for the achievement of a just comprehensive peace, not a partial or separate solution. He said: This is a sound position which I appreciate and respect.

The head of the PLO Political Department stressed that Syria deems the Palestine question its central issue. Touching on the current situation experienced by the Palestinian people inside the occupied territories, Qaddumi said that Israel is working to increase security and economic pressures on the Palestinian people to increase tension within the Palestinian Authority [PA]. He indicated that Israeli Prime minister Yitzhaq Rabin wishes to create a state of tension that leads to a civil war in the Palestinian territories.

He warned against heeding the Israeli attempts to drag the Palestinian people to internecine fighting. He stressed that any measure that calls for handing over Palestinian weapons is wrong and impermissible under the current circumstances, especially since the Palestinian people are still under occupation and need weapons to defend themselves. He said that the decision to disarm the Palestinian people is a cardinal sin which we cannot permit.

He called for dialogue among all Palestinian factions to arrive at a solution to the problems facing them in the Gaza Strip. He indicated that the PA has so far not established its sovereignty over the Gaza Strip and Jericho. He noted that all those who enter or leave the self-rule areas need permission in advance from Israel. He said Israel closes these areas' crossings and besieges them whenever it wants. He said Israel continues to build settlements, besiege the Gaza area, close Jerusalem, and confiscate lands.

Qaddumi reiterated the call to devise a clear strategy and setting up a committee for supervising the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations as used to happen in the past. He also called for improving the PA's performance.

Qaddumi indicated that the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations revolve in a vicious circle and that the Palestinian-Israeli track has hit a deadlock. He stressed that Israel is avoiding basic issues in the negotiations with the Palestinians. Qaddumi stressed the need for international pressure against Israel. He said that the international community, especially European quarters, have begun to complain about Israeli behavior, which aims to undermine the peace process.

Abu-Middayn Says Rabin Does Not Seek Peace

JN1404090995 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0700 GMT 14 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Furayh Abu-Middayn, justice minister in the Palestinian National Authority [PNA], has said that Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin does not seek peace. In a speech at the al-Azhar University in the Gaza Strip, Abu-Middayn said: Trusting this man is tantamount to trusting a sieve.

The justice minister criticized the Israeli plans to establish new settlements in Palestinian territory. He said that settlement activities are tantamount to a declaration of war, adding that the PNA information indicate that the Israelis intend to build another 5,600 housing units.

Radio Criticizes Syrian, Iranian 'Instigation'

JN1404074395 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0517 GMT 14 Apr 95

[Station commentary]

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[FBIS Translated Text] Good morning. From Damascus, which had been once—but is no longer—a bulwark of Arabism, a voice emerged anticipating Palestinian civil war. This Syrian voice is in unison with an Iranian voice, which spits out its venom to foment sedition and ignite the Palestinian arena.

The Syrian call for intra-Palestinian fighting, and the Iranian call for shedding Palestinian blood, both came after Amnesty International has drawn the attention of world public opinion to the flagrant human rights violations committed by the Damascus authorities. Amnesty International noted that there are Palestinian, Jordanian, Lebanese, and Syrian political prisoners in the horrible Syrian prisons.

The Syrian authorities, however, disregard these facts. Thus, the Syrian press is engaged in instigation against the Palestinian National Authority. For example, the Syrian newspaper AL-THAWRAH yesterday called for stopping the collection of weapons from those whom it called the Palestinian opposition. We would like to ask the Syrian press and radio and those who supervise them: Would you allow unorganized carrying of weapons in Damascus? Would you allow those whom you call Palestinian opposition to roam the streets of Damascus while carrying their weapons, or even to carry weapons on the Golan Heights, which are still occupied, assuming that you are still at war with Israel?

We honestly told our Palestinian people that some elements that threaten Palestinian national security receive their instructions from abroad. Our people are now reading the press and listening to the radios of Tehran and Damascus, which are fomenting intra-Palestinian fighting and inciting some factions—which have abandoned their Palestinian and national identity and allegiance—day and night to create disorder and carry weapons.

We ask the Syrians and Iranians: Would you accept the storing of weapons in the quarters of Damascus and Tehran? You want for the Palestinian people what you do not accept for yourselves, even though the Palestinian people are still suffering from Israeli occupation, while you in Damascus are still negotiating with this occupation in Washington and elsewhere, just as the Iranians did when they negotiated with Israel and received weapons from it during their war with Iraq.

We as Palestinians may have differences, but we will not resort to weapons to settle our disputes. No other weapon than that of the Palestinian National Authority shall be allowed, along with our national security forces, in our Palestinian arena here in Jericho and there in Gaza. Perhaps, those who supervise the Damascus government-run media and the Tehran media have forgotten that most of the weapons of those whom they call opposition were obtained from Israel and sold to the opposition to ignite sedition in the Palestinian arena after it receives a signal from abroad, specifically from Damascus and Tehran. Where were these weapons during the intifadah and why have these weapons appeared now after the first Palestinian National Authority was established in Gaza and Jericho? Why have the weapons of the opposition appeared all of a sudden, just as this opposition itself appeared all of a sudden in the second year of the intifadah?

We are wagering on the awareness of our Palestinian people to stem sedition. As for those who want to trigger sedition from outside, they will only meet humiliation and disgrace. Our Palestinian people and their people will only show contempt for their illusions and calls for sedition. This is as if the murder and siege of the Israeli occupation is not enough for us, the Palestinians, while those people continue to go too far in their sick illusions and dreams.

Commander: FBI Cannot Conduct Own Inquiry on Bombing

TA1304170395 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1300 GMT 13 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] FBI investigators have arrived in Israel to investigate the murder of U.S. citizen Alisa Flatow in the terrorist attack near Kfar Darom. Her interrogation is in line with the long-arm law which was adopted by the U.S. Congress nine years ago and enables the U.S. legal authorities to act against terrorists outside the United States. Our correspondent Aviv Bushinsky reports that the police's forensic laboratory workers will aid the FBI and the Palestinian police in the investigation. At the same time, Rashid Abu-Shibak, the deputy commander of the Palestinian security services in Gaza, announced that the U.S. investigators will not be allowed to conduct an investigation of their own and that they will have to settle for a report from the joint Israeli-Palestinian coordination committee.

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Algeria

Zeroual, Nahnah View Joint Committee for Election

LD1304203695 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 13 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] State President Liamine Zeroual today received Mahfoud Nahnah, leader of the Islamic Society Movement [HAMAS]. [passage omitted]

After the meeting Mr. Nahnah said the following:

[Begin Nahnah recording] We stressed the need to set up a joint committee from among the political partners to reach the holding of the forthcoming presidential elections and the period after that. We stressed this issue and his excellency the president accepted it, in addition to the presence of international observers as guarantees to get out of the Algerian crisis with the minimum costs. In addition to that there were other very important points such as the way to safeguard the legitimacy of the country and the way to protect the democratic process and freedoms, in accordance with the national constant principles and the republican system of this country so that there are no deviations.

We stressed this to his excellency the head of state and we hope, as he put it, that there will be another meeting to define our views on these committees which will be set up, to protect the democratic process, and to continue the issue of dialogue to the greatest extent without exclusion. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Prime Minister: Elections Will Be Held 'on Time'

LD1304231795 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 2200 GMT 13 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Prime Minister Mokdad Sifi has confirmed that presidential elections are the result of dialogue, and that the dialogue will remain open in all stages of the presidential elections, which are, he said, regarded as a stage toward solving the crisis through which the country is passing. Head of state Liamine Zeroual has confirmed this on numerous occasions.

Mokdad Sifi explained that the presidential elections will be held on time, and that measures related to the technical and security preparations have been completed for this operation to take place in the best possible conditions.

[Begin Sifi recording] As I observe, everything has been taking place as desired, that is from the technical side. Some of the provinces are ready to begin the elections. About the security situation: We have observed that there is a big improvement, but the security situation, even in foreign countries, is always relative, that is, not completely calm. In my opinion, there is no country which has complete calm. We should look at other countries besides Algeria. We have taken all measures, and we are resolved and determined to take further measures to allow the elections to proceed peacefully in the security field. Preparations for the elections in the technical field are good, as well as in the environmental field, if one permits this expression, they are good,so that we can allow the Algerian people to cast their votes quite freely and with transparency, all those who want to vote. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Assembly To Meet Next Month To Discuss Elections

MM1304155295 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 13 Apr 95 pp 1, 4

[Reports by Amir Taheri in London and Ahmad Kamal Hamdi in Bonn: "Algerian National Assembly To Meet Next Month To Discuss Presidential Elections"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] An Algerian official announced yesterday that the transitional National Assembly is expected to meet next month to pave the way for presidential elections.

Mayhoub Mayhoubi, spokesman for President Liamine Zeroual, told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that the assembly will discuss a number of amendments to the electoral law to allow a return to the election process in Algeria. He added that a timetable might be announced for the elections in June depending on the assembly's work.

He also said that the second phase of the national dialogue is proceeding well despite the continuing differences of opinion between the participants, and that full details of the government's negotiations with the National Liberation Front and the Socialist Forces Front will be published next week.

Mayhoubi said that eight other parties will join the dialogue, which is focusing on the presidential elections. According to some Western sources, the authorities are engaged in a "secret dialogue" with some members of the [Islamic] Salvation Front leadership, but Mayhoubi did not confirm or deny that.

Western sources in Algeria also say that four senior Army officers have sent a message to President Zeroual expressing support for a dialogue and urging the president to "do everything humanly possible to negotiate a peaceful transfer of power to an elected authority." [passage omitted]

Army Kills 140 Gunmen; New Parties Forming

JN1304203295 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 11 Apr 95 pp 1, 4

[All place names as published]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Algiers—Since last week, Algeria has been witnessing a massive relocation of Army units. Military quarters have spoken of the entry of two Army units into the capital, and their taking up of positions in the Hocine Bey barracks.

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Reliable sources reported that security troops have made some remarkable gains against armed groups. A security source said the Army managed this week to kill 140 gunmen in the suburbs of the al-Ma'alimah area in the Tibazah Province. The gunmen were planning to attack hotels on the coast of the Tibazah Province used by journalists. It is widely known that several foreign press teams are currently visiting Algeria.

Other sources said that an attempt to storm the premises of Algerian Television in Algiers was thwarted last Thursday [6 April] when a gunman was apprehended on the al-Shuhada' [Martyrs] Street, where the television premises are located.

The sources added that a clash took place between gunmen and security troops near the "Admiralty" in Algiers Port.

AL-HAYAH has learned that Algerian aircraft bombarded the Wahyo Valley when Algerian television was transmitting video footage on the Islamic Salvation Army. The bombardment damaged the transmission station. Informed sources said the station was repaired on 9 April. Troops were deployed in the area to protect it.

On the political level, two new political organizations have completed preparations for holding their constituent assemblies and declaring their debut on the political scene. Meanwhile, President Zeroual has continued his meetings with party leaders. Within this context, he received a delegation of the Movement for Democracy in Algeria led by Secretary General Khalil Ismail [name as published] yesterday.

Media sources said that former Prime Minister Redha Malek [name as published] has begun an effort to put the final touches on a statement that will declare the birth of a new political bloc in early May. The new bloc will include members of his previous government. It will most likely be called the "Republican Democratic Axis". The tenets of this bloc converge with the ideas embraced by Dr. Said Saadi (leader of the Rally for Culture and Democracy) and Cherif al-Hashemi (leader of Challenge—formerly the Algerian Communist Party). The creation of a bloc led by Malek seems to be motivated by the upcoming presidential elections. The new party will bring together opponents of Hocine Ait-Ahmed (leader of the Socialist Forces Front). It will seek to represent Algerian central provinces.

As for western Algerian provinces, prominent figures there began efforts some three months ago to prepare for the proclamation of a political organization comprising "marginalized figures" associated with the former regime, including a former information minister and a retired army general.

This new organization has managed to launch a new French-speaking daily in western Algeria, as well as an Arabic weekly in Algiers. This organization is expected to announce an assembly meeting toward the end of April to pave the way for obtaining an official license from the Ministry of Interior.

It was also learned that a group of figures in southern Algeria are attempting to form a grouping modeled on the movement led by Redha Malek and the movement that is taking shape in western Algeria. Nonetheless, these figures are still facing difficulties in their endeavors.

These "regional" parties that are currently taking shape are meant to serve as alternatives that could be used to run for presidential elections in case the "National Contract" group decides to boycott the elections. [passage omitted]

School Boycott To Continue Pending Agreement

LD1204205295 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in French 1800 GMT 12 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] [Announcer] Concerning the Tamazight issue, the [Berber Cultural Movement] national commissions gave a news conference this afternoon. According to the chairman of this tendency, the links are not cut with the presidency. Djamel Zenati was interviewed by Ali Nazim:

[Begin Zenati recording] As far as we are concerned, we are ready and available for the search—but an objective search—for any positive political solution to this issue. [end recording]

[Announcer] Concerning the resumption of school studies:

[Begin Zenati recording] This depends on the results of the negotiation, on the agreement that will be reached on the Tamazight issue. For the moment, the boycott will continue. [end recording]

[Announcer] This was Djamel Zenati, the chairman of the national commissions. But to finish with this topic, note that the committee of the students of the University of Tizi Ouzou has stated that it is in favor of the resumption of classes, according to a communique published and signed by its chairman Amrani Malek. In this communique, the committee of the Tizi Ouzou students considers that the proposals made by the state's presidency constitute a genuine beginning of the realization of the Tamazight demands even if they do not satisfy all that has been demanded.

In conclusion, the committee said that its efforts are aimed at avoiding the loss of a whole academic year by the thousands of students and the hundreds of thousands of pupils.

Another statement in the same vein is made by the coordination of Amazigh [Berber] students and secondary pupils. They denounce their exclusion by the two MCB tendencies from the delegation which was received at the state's presidency while, I quote, we are the main

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people concerned by the boycott. According to the coordination of the Amazigh students and secondary school pupils, this exclusion enters within the context of purely political considerations from which it distances itself because they run counter to the demands of Tamazight.

Agreement Signed With Pakistan for Rice Supply

LD1304170795 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 13 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Algerian national grain bureau has signed an agreement with the Pakistani Rice Export Corporation. According to the agreement, the latter will supply Algeria with 10,000 tonnes of rice.

The agreement was signed within the framework of a medium-term trade protocol between the Algerian grain bureau and the aforementioned Pakistani firm.

Bilateral Cooperation Program Signed With Libya

LD1404084195 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 0800 GMT 14 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] An executive program on Algerian-Libyan bilateral cooperation in the spheres of youth, sport, education, higher education, and scientific research was signed yesterday at the El Djazair Hotel [in Algiers]. The program aims to improve cooperation, particularly through exchanging delegations and expertise at various levels.

Egypt

Shortcomings in Aid to Nonnuclear States Viewed

NC1304141395 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1240 GMT 13 Apr 95

[Commentary by Muhammad Sharaf: "Egypt's Stand on Making the Middle East Free From Nuclear Weapons in Light of the Security Council's Resolution on Guarantees to Nonnuclear Countries"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The issue of ridding the Middle East of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction is a long-term one as indicated by many valid signs. This vital issue is closely linked to the major issue of ridding the whole world of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction.

This issue is clearly unique one far as the Middle East is concerned. The essence of this uniqueness lies in the fact that there has been a prolonged conflict between the Arab countries and Israel and that the latter possesses nuclear weapons, as experts and strategic studies centers confirm. Israel, however, has not officially or categorically admitted this, but there are tacit admissions. With the start of the peace process between the Arab countries and Israel, the latter was expected to make the necessary gestures showing its good, peaceful intentions, especially as it is the aggressor country which is participating in the peace process that hopes to end that aggression and hopes to agree on the bases for peaceful coexistence with its neighbors. But it clearly refuses to abandon its nuclear weapons. Its declarations that it will be ready to do so when comprehensive peace is achieved in the region are irrelevant. It is thus holding all the cards in its hands and imposing its own decision on the region's countries and peoples.

The uniqueness of the presence of nuclear weapons in the Middle East prompted President Husni Mubarak to launch his initiative in 1990 to make the region free from these weapons and from weapons of mass destruction. This uniqueness and the progress made by the peace process were the reasons that have made Egypt reiterate this demand. This is in addition to other known factors. One is the expiry of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT] which Egypt and almost all countries of the region have joined, with the exception of Israel. Another factor is the convocation of the international conference for extending the NPT on Monday, 17 April.

We mention the above important introduction in light of the Security Council's resolution on the superpowers' guarantees to the nonnuclear countries that join the NPT and to underline the Egyptian stand's basic principles.

The first principle is that Egypt supports the NPT and will not withdraw from it. But it has reservations about its indefinite extension—as President Mubarak noted in his statements yesterday—out of concern for the future of the nonnuclear countries and until all countries have joined it and the international community has taken serious action to free the whole world from nuclear weapons. Egypt is adhering to its stand and to its demand that the Middle East region be free from nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction. Egypt believes that removal of these weapons is one of the most important and fundamental components of a comprehensive, stable, and real peace.

Regarding its stand on the five major nuclear countries' resolution extending guarantees to the nonnuclear countries which was issued by the Security Council on Tuesday, Egypt has criticized it because it does not mention that the use of nuclear weapons or the threat to use them pose a danger to world peace and security and because there is no mechanism to implement these guarantees. Additionally, the resolution does not stipulate that the Security Council is bound to take collective and effective measures for protection against any threat to peace and for suppressing any hostile action. A study of the resolution does in fact reveal that it is not enough by itself to prevent a nuclear attack on nonnuclear countries and that these guarantees will be in the form of aid and assistance after the attack has already taken place and these countries have suffered its terrible consequences.

Official Views Country's 'Positive' NPT Proposals

NC1204212195 Cairo AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 10 Apr 95 p 16

[From the "Dividing Lines" column by Samir Rajab]

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[FBIS Translated Text] Some are asking, rightfully: What if Egypt withdrew from the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT], which it joined along with 18 other countries in 1968? I asked this question of Dr. Nabil al-'Arabi, Egypt's permanent delegate to the UN, one of the few international experts in international law, and the brilliant negotiator who took part in the Taba crisis talks. Answering with logic and reason, Dr. al-'Arabi said: Very briefly, if this were to happen we would give Israel a golden opportunity for nuclear expansion. Israel wishes to evade international inspection so that it may do what it wants without any supervision. The issue between us and them is that we want Israel to be brought under the treaty, not help her escape from it. And this is the reason for Egypt's support for the universality of the treaty and the demand for its procedures to be more effective, he explained.

Dr. al-'Arabi added: We must bear in mind that President Mubarak's 1989 initiative called for freeing the Middle East region of weapons of mass destruction. This requires great effort to achieve this noble humanitarian goal, a goal that will provide guarantees for the security and stability of the region's peoples and for all future generations.

I asked Dr. al-'Arabi: Does Israel still insist on not joining the NPT? He answered: So far, we can say that there is no change.

I asked him: Does Egypt maintain its position as well? He answered: The Egyptian stance is clear. We do not approve of an indefinite extension of the treaty as long as the Israeli nuclear program remains outside inspection. We insist that Israel declare its commitment to join the treaty within a specific period of time, he concluded.

In the meantime, Egypt has put forward positive and constructive proposals which call for strengthening the nuclear inspection system and which give the International Atomic Energy Agency a strong boost and sufficient capability to enable it to assume its responsibility. Egypt has also expressed reservations at the "deterrence procedure" in the case of a nuclear aggression. This procedure, as viewed by the five permanent members of the Security Council, does not go beyond convening the Security Council to discuss assistance for the countries subjected to this aggression!! Despite this obvious flaw, any of these five states may use its veto power, and let the weak go to hell!!

One word remains in the end. The coming generations will proudly remember Egypt in the year 1995, who refused to leave these generations at the mercy of destiny. History will highlight this period of time and confirm that Egypt's men are always the most honorable and noblest of men.

Interior Minister Highlights Security Successes

NC1304180895 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1610 GMT 13 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 13 Apr (MENA)—Interior Minister Hasan al-Alfi has stated that all the ministry's departments are playing their role to the fullest. He said recent security successes are appreciated by the political leadership, state sectors, and the international community.

During a meeting with his assistants, department directors, and security directors today, the interior minister said the ministry will continue to firmly and resolutely confront anyone who attempts to encroach on legitimacy and law in order to ensure security and stability.

During the meeting the interior minister stressed the need to restore discipline and order to Egyptian society and to retain the cultural image of the homeland. He said that all security bodies must apply every law and bylaw so that every citizen can feel equal before the law. The interior minister said the law is indivisible and stressed the importance of full coordination among the Ministry's various departments.

Minister al-Alfi said the ministry has reconsidered the policy of granting weapons licenses in a bid to ensure that all the requirements for justifying the purchase of weapons, type of weapons, and quantity are available.

Commentary Urges Ending Iraqi Sanctions

NC1204184395 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 10 Apr 95 p 9

[From the "Viewpoint" column by Muhammad 'Abdallah: "Crime and Punishment"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The crime of the vicious Iraqi invasion of Kuwait took piace on 2 August 1990. Then came punishment in the form of comprehensive sanctions imposed on the perpetrator and on the innocent sons of the people, followed by a merciless war which brought together all those from near and far to prevent the criminal from escaping the consequences of his crime, a crime which could not be forgiven regardless of its causes.

The war ended with a crushing defeat for the Iraqi regime. But this regime remained in power, either because of a latent strength within it or because of a latent desire among its Western enemies who see benefits in keeping it in power.

The punishment continued but, as witnessed by everyone, it has become a punishment for the Iraqi people only because the regime has all the resources. Its officials are eating, drinking, enjoying themselves, arming its remaining forces, fighting their enemies inside, and issuing their pathetic papers.

But the people alone—both Arabs and Kurds—have been punished. Its sons were forced to go to war and were killed inside their houses, factories, and fields. Many of them fled to the desert, the mountains, the marshlands, and to exile in near and distant countries. The hands of Iran and Turkey also reached Iraq's territories and attacked its people when either felt an appetite for killing or destroying.

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Prior to this, punishment included children still in their mothers' wombs who were born deformed as a result of starvation and lack of medicine. Hundreds of thousands died for the same reason.

After five years of punishing the Iraqi people, the punishment itself has almost become a crime perpetrated daily against the people who lack a means to end the tragedy. The people are deprived, despite their country's immense wealth, of a glass of clean water, a dose of medicine, and of electricity. Their children have no pencils or books.

Major and minor crimes have mushroomed in Iraq because poverty has spread throughout this fraternal country. Some people are selling their clothes to feed themselves; they find no buyers. Others are offering their remaining shoes to buy bread, when they can find it. The Iraqis have no choice but to sell their own flesh, and some might even do so very cheaply.

In light of the Iraqi people's tribulation, it is useless to say that Saddam's regime is responsible. It is useless to say that we should wait until this regime is gone or submits completely to those leading the campaign to maintain the sanctions.

Our conscience urges us to say that the Iraqi regime, as attested by to UN observers and inspectors, has travelled a long way, if not the whole way, toward removing the weapons of mass destruction it sought to possess.

Despite all the regime's calamities, there is no escaping the fact that negotiations must be held with it; it is a reality for the sake of saving the Iraqi people. The regime might awaken from its coma, learn its harsh lesson, and sincerely cooperate with the Arabs and Muslims for the sake of ending the suffering.

Extend your hands to the Iraqi people.

Columnist Criticizes Regime's Human Rights Record

NC1104033595 Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 6 Apr 95 p 2

[Column by Dr. Nu'man Jum'ah: "Pulses"]

[FBIS Translated Text] In Egypt the individual does not enjoy the minimum guarantees of humanitarian treatment. Therefore, he does not do his duty, is negative and indifferent, and occasionally resorts to self-destructive or illegal acts.

If the Wafd Party wins the majority of People's Assembly seats, it will form a government of the people whose work program and main goal will be to safeguard human rights. The name of the Interior Ministry in Wafd's era will be the Ministry of Human Security and Rights.

The hopes for renaissance, more production, the growth of national income, protection of public funds, and reduction in violence and crime start with the individual, who can achieve all this. But the individual cannot work and make a sincere contribution unless he has certain minimum rights that safeguard his humanity. In Egypt the individual does not enjoy this minimum requirement.

In Egypt individuals are killed without investigation or trial, are tortured in order to extract confessions, and are jailed on mere suspicion or for committing acts that are not criminal and that do not undermine the security of society. The individual drinks sewage water and breathes polluted and contaminated air, so he suffers from kidney failure and other deadly diseases resulting from abuse of the environment. Youths do not find work and housing and have no future. Children do not find schools, training, medicine, and food to strengthen their bones.

Let us discuss the physical harm, including the restriction of freedoms, the mutilation of bodies, and the killing of souls. We find we have a cruel and oppressive regime that disregards the individual and his humanity. Whoever ascends the seat of power forgets that he is a citizen and a human being. He thinks his position will be permanent and will protect and ensure him against the vicissitudes of life.

Everybody has become a jailer and a hangman. The people are taken to prison with derision and without mercy, kindness, or humanity. The jailer has become used to oppressing and tyrannizing and to simplifying and rationaiizing matters. In his eyes, the citizen is born to be jailed. For the jailer the prison is a park, a nightclub, or a hotel in which people enjoy life. Why are the victims angry and why do they weep and complain?

The tyrannic jailer will not comprehend his crime unless he drinks from the same cup, tastes the meaning of oppression, and tries to sleep on a concrete slab inside a cell next to a lavatory. Then he will realize that his crime is ugly and that a minute inside prison walls is an entire age—a dark, black, and bitter age. It is difficult for an ordinary person who is unfairly jailed to forget or to forgive society. The days of oppression will continue to haunt him.

The jailer will feel the cold, loneliness, panic, and remorse when the sun of has power sets and his rule ends. He will face the people with assets that are devoid of mercy, ethics, and goodwill.

There must be a legislative revolution. There must be a moral pause with this forest of unfair laws which criminalize acts without conscience or discrimination. These laws have been created by tyrants to allow the regime to reach any person and torture him on mere suspicion of disobedience. Laws that allow indefinite preventive custody must be abolished. The preventive custody laws must be amended to include only cases that might undermine investigation, allow a possibility of escape, and in crimes of blood, drugs, theft, and rape.

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A two-year institute for human rights must be established. Success in this institute must be a condition for anyone who wants to assume power and to give orders and be obeyed. The individual is God's creation. A jailer has no right to threaten his humanity.

Court Postpones 'Vanguard of Conquest' Case

NC1204152795 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1235 GMT 12 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 12 Apr (MENA)—The Higher Military Court today decided to postpone the case of the attempt to revive the al-Jihad Organization, better known as the Vanguard of Conquest case, until Sunday [16 April] at the defendants' request so that they can hire defense lawyers.

In its session held today, the court decided to refer fourth defendant 'Amr Muhammad 'Abd-al-Mun'im, sixth defendant Husam Hasan Isma'il, 26th defendant Hilmi 'Abd-al-'Azim 'Ukashah, and 34th defendant Nabil Muhammad al-Maghrabi to a medical examiner to ascertain their injuries.

The Military Court today began the trial of the defendants in the case, who number 42. Three of the defendants in the al-Jihad organization case have already been sentenced to either life imprisonment or to a 17-year term.

At the beginning of the session, the court asked the defendants if they have lawyers to defend them. Defendant 'Abd-al-Ra'uf Amir al-Jaysh answered that they do not have attorneys and that they need time to hire them. He complained about deteriorating health conditions and requested that he be kept in the military prison. The court then listened to defendants Husam Isma'il, 'Amr 'Abd-al-Mun'im, Muhammad Ahmad Murad, Nabil al-Maghrabi, and Anwar 'Ukashah. They all complained about the health conditions and requested that they be transferred to the military prison.

The prosecution accused the defendants of joining a group that is against the law with a view to suspending the provisions of the Constitution and the laws, harming national unity and social peace, and plotting to carry out crimes that seek to change the state's Constitution and republican system. The prosecution also accused the defendants of possessing explosives and firearms without a license with a view to using them to disturb security and public order.

Sudan

Reportage on Visit by Iranian Assemby Speaker

Nateq-Nuri Meets With al-Bashir

LD1304121395 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 13 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] In the continuation of his visit to Sudan, Majles Speaker [Ali Akbar] Nateq-Nuri met with Mr. 'Umar Hasan al-Bashir, the Sudanese president, this morning. Please listen to a report by our correspondent in Khartoum.

[Begin recording] At the meeting, referring to the good and expanding ties between the two countries, the Sudanese president emphasized the closeness of the views of Iran and Sudan on many international issues. He added: The ties between Iran and Sudan are influenced by the Islamic revolution of Iran. We consider the instructions of Imam Khomeyni, God have mercy on him, as a great achievement for the government and people of Sudan.

Referring to the fact that Iran and Sudan are under political and economic pressure, and also propaganda onslaught, from the enemies of Islam, al-Bashir said: This is because Iran and Sudan seek to implement Islamic precepts in the two countries and do not yield to foreign rule.

Stressing that such pressure and propaganda would never prevent us from following our main path, he said: The government and people of Sudan are behind the Islamic revolution of Iran and will continue their course.

Describing the situation in the Muslim world, the Sudanese president said: Islamic countries are at present in difficult circumstances, under American and Western political and economic pressure. So that Arab countries, being in a weak position, have one after the other stretched the hand of friendship towards the Zionist regime. Only Iran and Sudan remain steadfast and defend the rights of the innocent people of Palestine.

He said: Western propaganda and baseless American allegations of violation of human rights in Sudan and this country's support for terrorism stem from their failure to prevent the implementation of Islamic precepts in Sudan. He added: We will never forsake Islamic principles.

Referring to the plots of the enemies of Sudan to create unrest and tension on that country's borders, al-Bashir described as outstanding the government's recent victories in the south. He added: With love for Islam and a firm resolve the Sudanese nation will withstand all difficulties and will not compromise.

Al-Bashir described as correct and fundamental the relations between Iran and Sudan. He added: Those ties could be a suitable model for other Islamic countries.

He finally called for the elevation of relations between the two countries in the diplomatic, economic and cultural fields.

At the meeting, referring to the fundamental stances of the Sudanese government in dealing with international issues, Nateq-Nuri, the Majles speaker, said: There is political and economic pressure by world arrogance on Iran and Sudan because they do not wish us to be independent.

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Stressing that relations with Sudan have a special place in our foreign policy, the Majles speaker said: We desire cooperation with Sudan. We shall do all in our power to support Sudan.

Nateq-Nuri said the biased and baseless propaganda by world arrogance against Iran and Sudan stems from the insistence of the two countries on implementing Islamic precepts. He added: Such propaganda would not have any effect in the attainment of our goals. We shall continue our path steadfastly.

Finally, referring to the cooperation between the two countries in the political and economic fields, the Majles speaker requested the setting up of a committee, comprising officials of the two countries, to follow-up ways of expansion of ties and outstanding issues between the two countries. [end recording]

Holds Talks With Foreign Minister

LD1304212995 Tehran IRNA in English 1801 GMT 13 Apr 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Khartoum, April, 13, IRNA—Sudanese Foreign Minister 'Uthman Ali Taha in a meeting here Monday [10 April] with visiting Iranian Majles speaker, Nateq-Nuri said "enemies try to distort image of Islam in order to prevent nations from turning to it". The meeting in which Iranian deputy foreign minister, Sheykholeslam was present, 'Uthman Taha underlined the necessity of Tehran-Khartoum cooperation and unified action in international communities.

Ali 'Uthman Taha an influential politician and effective in Sudan's decision makings voiced confidence about the spread of islam among nations. In the meeting, he elaborated on Sudanese government's recent victories in the south.

Nateq-Nuri voiced satisfaction with Sudan's victories in the south and underscored the promotion of bilateral ties.

Meanwhile Majles speaker met separately with Sudanese ministers of mines and culture on Thursday afternoon. In the meetings, Sudanese ministers of mines and culture called for mutual cooperation in economic and cultural fields.

Nateq-Nuri and the high ranking delegation accompanying him will wind up their five days visit to Sudan on Saturday.

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Bahrain

Reportage on Security Situation, Foreign Reaction

Amir Reportedly Meets Opposition

LD1304164995 Tehran IRNA in English 1233 GMT 4 Apr 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] London, Apr. 4, IRNA—The emir of Bahrain is reported to have held high-level talks for the first time with opposition leaders in an attempt to restore calm before next week's international economic conference in the island state. According to GNA news agency, the leaders met Shaykh 'Isa Bin-Salman Al Khalifah on Sunday to express "concern at the violence and sabotage against public property" but provided little other detail.

Members of the exiled Bahrain Freedom Movement were quoted by the London TIMES Tuesday saying that "about 20 Shia Muslims were summoned by the emir to ask them to end their unrest" which has been going on for the past four months. Street disturbance flared last December after the arrest of petitioners demanding the restoration of parliament set up after independence from Britain in 1971.

The situation reportedly deteriorated last weekend after the arrest of prominent Shia cleric, Shaykh 'Abd-al-Amir al-Jamri, who was also a former member of the dissolved parliament. Tension has also increased with a call from the main exiled opposition group, the Islamic Front for the Liberation of Bahrain, for a campaign of civil disobedience.

In a release last week, London-based human rights group Amnesty International called upon the Bahraini government to end killings, torture and detentions without trial in cracking down on the demonstrations. It said that at least seven civilians had been killed in several incidents and scores of others injured during the past four months as security forces have resorted to use live bullets to quell numerous peaceful demonstrations. Estimates of mass arrests vary between 300 as claimed by the government to 3,000 claimed by the opposition.

British Minister Voices Support to Amir

JN1404083395 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0535 GMT 14 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Manama, 13 Apr (WAKH)—His Highness Shaykh Hamad Bin-'Isa Al Khalifah, heir apparent and commander in chief of the Bahraini Defense Force, has received a telephone call from Nicholas Soames, minister of defense for British troops [name and title as received]. Soames conveyed his greetings to His Highness Shaykh 'Isa Bin-Salman al-Khalifah, amir of Bahrain, and to the Bahraini Government, and expressed his wishes of continued progress and prosperity for Bahrain.

The British minister expressed his satisfaction with the continuation of the close relations between Bahrain and the United Kingdom. He voiced the British Government's support for the security measures taken by the Bahraini Government to preserve the country's security and stability and safeguard Bahrain's economic, political, and social achievements.

Soames also stressed the British Government's readiness to cooperate with Bahrain in all fields in order to realize the mutual goals of the two friendly countries and peoples.

Philippine Envoy Comments

JN1404204795 Manama WAKH in English 1600 GMT 13 Apr 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Manama, April 13 (GNA)—The Philippine Ambassador to Bahrain Ahmed Ataalla Sakam [name as received] affirmed that the situation in Bahrain is stable adding that Filipino community were completely satisfied with their presence in Bahrain despite small incidents that took place in Bahrain.

The remarks came following reports by international news agency, quoting President Fidel Ramos while he was speaking about the situation in Bahrain.

The ambassador went on to say that when the president of Philippines was asked about his government's procedures regarding this matter, he advised the Filipinos to be vigilant at this time, but there was no decision to ban Filipino workers against travelling to Bahrain.

The ambassador said that every part of the world is facing such problems, expressing his believe that the of Bahrain will hastily overcome these problems.

"We are confident that this problem will come to an end soon," he said.

In a statement to GNA, the ambassador affirmed that no Filipinos have been abused in Bahrain and expressed the hope that this problem would end soon.

Kuwait

Iranian Speaker on POWs, Arms, Nuclear Activities

LD1204120895 Tehran IRNA in English 1148 GMT 12 Apr 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kuwait, April 12, IRNA—The visiting Iranian Majlis Speaker Hojatoleslam 'Ali Akbar Nateq-Nuri said in a press conference here Tuesday [11 April] that he hoped Iraq would set free Iranian prisoners of war [word indistinct] in a good will gesture.

Asked to comment on purchase of arms by Iran Nateq-Nuri said that Majlis makes the decision on arms purchases and that the Majlis debates on the issue are broadcast live on the radio.

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Nateq-Nuri said that Iran's annual arms purchases is about one billion dollars. However, the figure for the regional states was several billion dollars a year, he added.

On Iran's nuclear activities, Nateq-Nuri said that Iran, as a member of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, had agreed with supervision of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

However, he added, enemies of Iran tried to falsly portray the existing realities.

The Iranian Majlis speaker regretted that the media had kept silence on Zionist regime's refusal to sign the treaty and accept IAEA's inspection.

On Iran-United Arab Emirates relations, Nateq-Nuri said that Islamic Republic of Iran welcomed visit to Tehran of the UAE foreign minister aimed at settling disputes in a friendly atmosphere.

He underlined that the UAE emir's letter to Iran only focused on Abu Musa island, which is now the only dispute between Iran and the emirate.

Saudi Arabia

Shaykh Yamani Offers 'Moderate' Government Program

MM1304110495 London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI in Arabic 8-9 Apr 95 p 1

[Unattributed report: "Shaykh Ahmad Zaki Yamani Returns to the Limelight With Moderate Islamic Government Program"]

[FBIS Translated Text] London, AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI—Observers who followed the lecture delivered by Shaykh Ahmad Zaki Yamani, the former Saudi oil minister, at al-Furqan House in southwest London Thursday say that the man is returning to the limelight but perhaps with a different role and different aims.

Since his exit from the cabinet by a sudden decision in 1983, which led to a drop in oil prices and the dollar value for a short period, Shaykh Yamani has been trying to avoid the spotlight and to avoid public meetings, concentrating all his efforts on the Energy Center which he supervises.

It is worth noting that his lecture at al-Furqan House, the Islamic foundation which he heads and which deals with Islamic heritage, was generally political even though its title indicated it was on the Islamic Shari'ah. He spoke about the Islamic world in general, fiercely criticizing the weakness of the regimes. He presented a concept of government which completely contradicts the existing regimes. He said that the picture is gloomy, and that the Islamic states are being used to serve foreign interests, that there are those who ignite conflicts to promote arms sales, and that the rich states are now moving toward equality in poverty with others after the evaporation of their wealth.

Shaykh Yamani emphasized that there is no full implementation of the Islamic Shari'ah in any of the Islamic states, including the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. He said that all Islamic governments apply usury and pay interest and charge interest, noting that the existence of a Western banking system in the Islamic world is the best proof of that.

He said that the Islamic Shari'ah is based on three main pillars: social justice, democracy (shura), and respect for human rights. He said that any Islamic state that does not abide by these basic rules is violating the Islamic Shari'ah and jurisprudence.

Shaykh Yamani cleverly drew a distinction between extremist Islamic movements and moderate Islam, using numerous examples and phrases to stress his opposition to the first, because it is tantamount to terrorism which is detrimental to Islam, and his support for moderate Islam. He reaffirmed the need to open the way for interpretations, saying that the Islamic Shari'ah is open to amendment and change in line with developments in society. He cited many examples where the texts could be adjusted in accordance with the requirements of the age. He said that Caliph 'Umar Ibn-al- Khattab stopped enforcing the death penalty [Hadd al-Hirabah] in the year of al-Ramadah. He criticized Iraqi President Saddam Husayn for enforcing the theft penalty [cutting off the hand under Islamic law] while his country is blockaded and his people are starving.

Shaykh Yamani called for a redrafting of a new Islamic "constitution" for a modern Islamic state based on linking the texts to the aims, stipulating that this should done by a select group of ulema, with the majority view prevailing in the end if they disagree. The jurisprudence experts of the sultans should be excluded from this.

One of those who attended al-Yamani's lecture described it as close to being a "program of government" not a lecture on Islamic jurisprudence. Although he studied Islamic law at Harvard University in the United States, by focusing on the lamentable conditions in the Islamic world and the lack of democracy he meant to propose political and economic solutions, in good English and with an attractive way of presentation which captivated members of the audience, most of whom were leading Islamic and Western intellectuals chosen with extreme care.

Shaykh Yamani avoided criticizing conditions in the [Saudi] Kingdom and only mentioned its name once when talking about the application of the Shari'ah in the Muslim world, but most of what he said in his lecture applied mainly to it. Perhaps his generalization had specific aims.

Knowledgeable people maintain that there is a silent crisis between Shaykh Yamani and the Saudi regime.

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The man has not visited the capital Riyadh since he was uncharacteristically dismissed from his post as oil minister after 24 years. He also has not participated in any internal political activity. It has been rumored that he turned down the chairmanship of the Shura Council formed recently when he was indirectly offered the post.

The Western press links Shaykh Yamani's name to any possible future change or modernization in the Saudi Kingdom, but he himself has avoided taking any steps which might arouse suspicion apparently because he did not wish to cause unpleasant sensitivities. For instance, he knows that the editor of a Saudi weekly magazine published in Riyadh was dismissed for conducting an interview with him. That interview has been put away in a drawer.

The coming days will witness more activity by Shaykh Yamani. Early next week he will chair the annual meeting of the World Energy Center which he founded. It is considered one of the most objective and scientific centers of its kind. Furthermore, he said more than once that he would need 10 lectures to explain the points he mentioned in passing in his recent lecture. That is a clear indication that his meetings with those who attended will be repeated in the near future.

In brief, it could be said that Shaykh Yamani is preparing himself for some role, a role which will not be that of Islamic preacher or lecturer on the Islamic Shari'ah. Thursday's lecture and the quality of the audience perhaps constituted the first step on a long road to a political position that would grow or recede depending on future developments in the Arabian Peninsula.

'Humane' Treatment of Illegal Immigrants Promised

MM1304142595 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 12 Apr 95 p 1

[Report by Amir Taheri: "Three Solutions for the Crisis of Immigrants in Saudi Arabia"]

[FBIS Translated Text] London—A high-ranking Saudi official has stated that over half a million illegal immigrants and residents in Saudi Arabia will soon be asked to rectify their status. He said: "We want to solve that problem quickly and humanely."

Statistics show that the number of foreigners in Saudi Arabia is about 5 million compared with an indigenous population of about 12 million. Last year some 250,000-350,000 foreign nationals who were living in the Kingdom illegally were sent back. The illegal immigrants will be offered three options:

1. They could apply to return to their own countries with the government's help. Those who come forward would not be subject to punitive measures or fines.

2. They could apply for work and residence permits. The government would help them find guarantors, or, if they are already working, they could take steps to make their status legal.

3. Legal and advisory assistance would be provided for those who qualify for Saudi citizenship, in order to speed up the processing of their applications and the necessary legal measures.

The Saudi official added: "We are not pursuing anyone. All we want is that people should abide by the law."

The mechanism for the implementation of the new policy is now ready and some parts of it have actually been enforced. The Saudi official also said: "In view of the fact that the vast majority of illegal immigrants are Muslims, the government feels that it is doubly obligated to treat them in the most humane way possible."

United Arab Emirates

Ra's al-Khaymah Ruler on Disputed Islands

MM1304130695 London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic 9-15 Apr 95 p 29-31

[Interview with Shaykh Saqr Bin Muhammad al-Qasimi, ruler of Ra's al-Khaymah and member of the Supreme Council of the United Arab Emirates, by unidentified correspondent at his court in Ra's al-Khaymah; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] [AL-MAJALLAH] The process of the settlement of the tribes in the mountainous regions in Ra's al-Khaymah has passed through some difficult stages and conditions. How did you manage to domesticate these tribes and entice them to accept settlement and participation in the development process?

[Al-Qasimi] We have made sure to safeguard two matters: The first was that the settlement would take place in the areas where the tribes already lived by providing them with support and help to remain in their places, villages and farms. The second was that we endeavour to increase the number of youths taking education, for we consider this as the basis for any development operation.

Thank God, we have succeeded greatly in doing so. The number of educated has increased and so did the number of those who took up jobs in the Government, the army, the police, and the coast guards.

[AL-MAJALLAH] Some say that the living conditions in the mountainous areas are difficult. What do you say to that?

[Al-Qasimi] This is not true. Most of those living in these areas have actually come down from the mountains, particularly after the young have acquired education and begun to work in government departments.

[AL-MAJALLAH] Has nobody remained to live on the mountains?

[Al-Qasimi] It is part of the customs of this region's people to live in one place in the summer and move to

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another place in the winter and live in a third place in the spring. This is one of their old inherited traditions.

[AL-MAJALLAH] Does not this movement from one place to another cause border problems with the neighboring countries?

[Al-Qasimi] No. Border problems do not concern the peoples. It is the government that deals with such matters and the movement of people has nothing to do with it.

[AL-MAJALLAH] What about the borders with the Sultanate of Oman?

[Al-Qasim] Our relations with Oman are good and we discuss border issues with it at the level of the UAE Government. [passage omitted]

[AL-MAJALLAH] We come now to the question of the UAE's islands that were occupied by Iran in 1971. How do you view this problem and how far could this matter go?

[Al-Qasimi] At no time whatsoever did we wish to become enemies to Iran which we consider to be a neighboring and Muslim country with whom we are anxious to have relations of good- neighborliness and cooperation. But having said that, we would not agree to concede any of our rights to these islands which were handed to Iran during British rule. We consider the British to be responsible for this problem, because Iran occupied these islands when they were still here and it was the British who handed the islands to it.

[AL-MAJALLAH] Then you consider Britain responsible for this problem?

[Al-Qasimi] Yes. They are the ones responsible, because when they decided to leave the region, they did not hand the islands to us but to the Iranians.

[AL-MAJALLAH] It was reported that Iran had tried to buy or lease these islands. Is that true?

[Al-Qasimi] The Iranian ambassadors used to offer to buy or lease the islands every now and then as a solution to the problem. But we used to tell them that we cannot discuss this matter until they first recognize our sovereignty over these islands. After that, we can discuss any ideas put to us pertaining to Iran's interests.

[AL-MAJALLAH] Does this mean that the recognition of sovereignty over the islands is the precondition for discussing the possible lease of these islands?

[Al-Qasimi] The most important thing is that these islands should revert to UAE sovereignty and due respect is accorded to the status of neighborliness. After that, everything can be discussed.

[AL-MAJALLAH] It is said that Iran had paid Ra's al-Khaymah a financial sum in return for the islands. How true is this?

[Al-Qasimi] This attempt was made during British rule through the mediation of the British commissioner Luce who used to advise us to reach an understanding with Iran. He told me: If you do not reach an understanding with Iran, you will be the loser. I told him: The loss of money is no loss, but the true loss is the loss of man's dignity. I also told him one cannot bargain over land or honor. We cannot accept to negotiate on these basis. We disagreed and the problem began since then.

[AL-MAJALLAH] How do you envisage the solution to this problem?

[Al-Qasimi] The first step must come from the Iranians, namely, the recognition of our sovereignty over these islands. After that, we can reach an understanding about the other issues.

[AL-MAJALLAH] How do you evaluate the role of the UAE Government in the attempt to resolve this problem?

[Al-Qasimi] Our position as an Emirate and the position of the UAE Government is one, and there are no differences between us. We both say the same thing. [passage omitted]

Yemen

Speaker on Dispute With Saudi Arabia, Internal Issues

NC1304132795 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1235 GMT 13 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 13 Apr (MENA)—Shaykh 'Abdallah al-Ahmar, speaker of the Yemeni House of Representatives, has stated that Yemeni President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih will pay a visit to Saudi Arabia soon, at the invitation of King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, custodian of the two holy mosques, in a bid to consolidate ties between the two fraternal states.

In a statement in Cairo today, al-Ahmar pointed out that the memorandum of understanding between Yemen and Saudi Arabia provides for the establishment of several committees to settle the outstanding problems between the two countries, as part of the relations of neighborliness and fraternity. He noted that the border dispute between the two countries has two parts. The first was settled more than 60 years ago under the al-Ta'if Agreement, which is not the subject of any dispute because it is a comprehensive agreement that not only tackles the question of the borders but all other issues. The second part, he added, is not covered under the al-Ta'if Agreement and it requires understanding and committees to examine the problem and reach a demarcation agreement to settle the dispute. He noted that border disputes are a very normal matter common to most world countries and that the Yemeni-Saudi dispute is not the only such case in the world. He added that it is natural that all problems between the two countries, including the rights of Yemenis in Saudi Arabia, will be settled through the joint committees.

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In his statement, Shaykh al-Ahmar called for lifting the blockade imposed on Libya and Iraq. He emphasized that Yemen backs the Egyptian stance on the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and sides with it in its just demand. He noted that it would not be fair for all the Arab states to sign the treaty while a nuclear state in the region is left out to threaten all the Arab states. He pointed out that the United States and the UN must bring Israel to account before Iraq and refrain from using double standards.

Regarding Yemeni internal problems, al-Ahmar stated that no differences exist between the General People's Congress and the Yemeni Reform Grouping, adding that both sides are partners in the ruling coalition and that cooperation between them exists in an exemplary manner. He noted that the two parties are joined by common links that enable them to proceed with firm steps and to be in agreement on whatever is in the interest of the country.

Al-Ahmar denied that the Yemeni political leadership has any plans to change the government at the present time. He noted that his country is going through economic, financial, and monetary reforms and is turning from a planned economy to a market economy. He added that Yemen is not the only country facing an economic crisis. He added: The reductions in the number of Armed Forces and civil servants that we have introduced are part of the financial and administrative reforms. The state, he added, is paying the salaries of one million people, both civilians and military, and therefore, it is compelled to introduce cuts.

He pointed out that there are no longer northern and southern military units. The troops, he added, are now merged under one army and there is no longer any trace of secession within the Army units.

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Kurdish, Turkish, Regime Actions in North Reported

SAIRI To Send 500 Fighters

NC1404094195 Beirut AL-SHIRA' in Arabic 10 Apr 95 p 14

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] AL-SHIRA' has interviewed Jawad al-Maliki, the official representative of the Islamic al-Da'wah Party. He asserted that a commander of the al-Badr Corps of the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq [SAIRI] held talks with Iraqi opposition leaders in Iraqi Kurdistan about sending 500 fighters from the al-Mustafa Brigade to fight alongside the national revolution forces. The fighters are expected to arrive in Kurdistan in the next few days.

Al-Maliki said a major operation aimed at overthrowing the ruling regime in Iraq requires advance coordination among the Iraqi opposition factions, which must intensify their efforts and mobilize their resources to achieve a comprehensive result. [passage omitted]

Al-Maliki said a mobilization and coordination committee formed in Iran between the al-Da'wah party and al-Sayyid Hakim's wing of SAIRI has opened mobilization centers in various Iranian areas and so far recruited 5,000 Iraqi fighters ready to leave for the southern fronts to confront the regime. [passage omitted]

Al-Maliki said a responsible group from the Islamic al-Da'wah party has arrived in Iraqi Kurdistan to observe the military operations and follow up the situation there.

Elsewhere, sources stated that the Hamzah Brigade of SAIRI's Badr forces left for Iraqi Kurdistan to participate in the military operations there.

Kurdish Labor Forces Attack Iraqi Army

LD1304173795 Tehran IRNA in English 1436 GMT 13 Apr 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Sanandaj, Kordestan Prov., April 13, IRNA—Forces of the Iraqi Kurdish Labour Party on Tuesday [11 April] attacked positions of the 33rd brigade of the Fifth Corps of the Iraqi Army near the city of Irbil, north of Iraq, sources close to Iraqi Kurds said on Wednesday. According to the sources, seven soldiers and non-commissioned officers were taken prisoner by the Kurdish Labour Party militiamen. They also captured two army headquarters and several group bunkers in the attack, the sources said. The Kurdish attackers also seized weapons and military equipment and a suitcase full of military documents, the sources said.

The sources said forces of the Kurdish Labour Party returned to their positions safely after the operations. The independent Labour Party of Iraqi Kurdistan is an ally of Jalal Talabani's Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK). The party has taken part in several military operations agaist the Iraqi Army forces stationed along the line separating the Kurdish controlled areas north of Iraq and the rest of the country.

The Tuesday attack was the first Kurdish ambush after the recent offensive by the Turkish Army on north of Iraq.

Barzani Comments on Baghdad Dialogue

JN1304111095 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 11 Apr 95 p 7

[Interview with KDP leader Mas'ud Barzani by Kamiran Qurrah-Daghi in Salah-al-Din; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Qurrah-Daghi] What are your expectations about the temporary truce between the two disputing parties, the Kurdistan Democratic Party [KDP] and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan [PUK]? Can this truce give tangible results as part of reconciliation and termination of fighting?

[Barzani] Friendly circles and fraternal parties are making praiseworthy efforts to resolve the current dispute. We wanted to give the good ones an opportunity to find a way out of this crisis.

[Qurrah-Daghi] Do you believe that the mediators, who represent various Kurdish parties, can succeed in making proposals that will serve as a basis for a solution in this short period of time?

[Barzani] The fraternal parties are making intensive efforts designed to work out a plan to end the conflict. We are awaiting this plan.

[Qurrah-Daghi] What are you expecting from the plan and from the other party to the conflict?

[Barzani] In fact, the main problem lies in the occupation of Irbil, which is considered the capital of the [Kurdistan] Region and the center of the legitimate institutions. The key to resolving other problems is to move out of Irbil and disarm it.

[Qurrah-Daghi] Are you ready to show flexibility on the conditions you set as part of evacuating Irbil, which is a controversial issue between the two sides?

[Barzani] Our objective is not a truce but a radical solution. If the gunmen and headquarters are not evacuated from Irbil, at least for a limited period of time to restore a bit of confidence between the two sides, then keeping these headquarters, which are usually protected by the peshmerga forces—the Kurdish fighters—will eventually lead to the resumption of the fighting. It is feared that the fighting will take place inside the city this time. We thus believe that the best solution is for Irbil to be devoid of the forces and headquarters at least for a limited period of time as I said.

[Qurrah-Daghi] What do you mean by the headquarters?

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[Barzani] We mean the military and party headquarters.

[Qurrah-Daghi] Can it then be said that you see a ray of light at the end of the tunnel?

[Barzani] We should be optimistic.

[Qurrah-Daghi] Let us discuss the Turkish military operation in Iraqi Kurdistan. First, what is your position on this operation?

[Barzani] The KDP clearly declared its position on the operation on the first day of the Turkish invasion. We do not support this operation in any way and we were never notified of it. We were surprised by the armored columns entering the al-Khabur border post. Our first concern now is the safety and security of our kinsfolk. We appealed to both parties, Turkey and the Workers Party of Kurdistan [PKK], not to transfer their problems to our area. We now stress the need for both parties to withdraw and not to settle their accounts on our land.

[Qurrah-Daghi] How do you assess Turkey's announcement that it has withdrawn 3,000 troops from the Kurdish area? Were you notified that this limited withdrawal was part of a complete withdrawal plan?

[Barzani] The Turkish Government did not notify us of this limited withdrawal. However, the official Turkish delegation that visited us a few days ago asserted to us that the Turkish forces will withdraw from our territory.

Reports from our sources in the area said there was a slight or partial withdrawal. Naturally, this is a good gesture, and we hope that the rest of the Turkish forces will withdraw as soon as possible. We also believe that the military solution is useless. Hence, a political solution should be sought.

[Qurrah-Daghi] Do you mean a political solution to the Kurdish problem in Turkey?

[Barzani] Yes.

[Qurrah-Daghi] There are conflicting estimates on the actual results of the Turkish operation. Statements made by Turkish military officers indicate that the operation is about to achieve its objectives and that their forces killed a large number of PKK fighters. Do you have your own estimates about this operation?

[Barzani] In fact, both sides are exaggerating. Our information indicates that there have been no large battles. I do not believe that a large operation by a regular army can achieve any result in a guerrilla war. Without fighting on steady fronts no regular army can achieve its objectives in this kind of war.

[Qurrah-Daghi] Has the KDP participated in any way whatsoever in the Turkish operation or cooperated in its implementation?

[Barzani] We have not participated in this operation in favor of any party. However, we have tried, as much as possible, to protect our kinsfolk from the problems they are facing as a result of fighting between the two sides.

[Qurrah-Daghi] Turkish political and press circles are talking about Ankara's endeavors to renew political relations with the Kurdish leadership to help protect security on the border area between Turkey and Iraqi Kurdistan based on agreements with the two major Kurdish parties. Has any official Turkish initiative been proposed to you in this regard?

[Barzani] We are very much concerned about security and stability in the border area, which will be in the interest of our kinsfolk. The official Turkish delegation proposed this issue to us. We, however, did not give a decisive answer because it should be studied here first. It was decided that a KDP delegation, and possibly a PUK delegation, will leave for Ankara at an official invitation. The delegation, or the two delegations, will discuss this issue with the Turkish side. We will make the appropriate decision in light of the results.

[Qurrah-Daghi] Do you expect the two delegations to leave soon?

[Barzani] Yes.

[Qurrah-Daghi] In recent months, Ankara has frequently stressed the need for dialogue between the Iraqi Kurdish leadership and Baghdad. In Ankara, they are now talking about the possibility of renewing the dialogue under the international resolutions, particularly Resolution 688. What is your position on this Turkish proposal and on the dialogue with Baghdad?

[Barzani] We consider Resolution 688 a good framework to resolve Iraq's internal problems, particularly the Kurdish problem. We did not, and will not, object to the principle of dialogue.

[Qurrah-Daghi] But there are no contacts with Baghdad?

[Barzani] At present, there is no dialogue or negotiations with Baghdad.

[Qurrah-Daghi] There is another issue currently being discussed by the political and popular circles in Iraqi Kurdistan; namely, the talks being held by two Kurdish parties, one representing your party, and the other representing the PUK, with Iranian officials in Tehran. What is going on there?

[Barzani] A senior delegation from our party has been in Tehran for 10 days. Earlier, a senior PUK delegation visited Tehran at an official invitation from the Islamic Republic [of Iran]. The Iranian brothers made praiseworthy efforts to bring views closer between the two parties as part of finding a solution to the conflict between us. These efforts are continuing and we have responded to them. However, the two delegations have not thus far reached a specific formula. The meetings are continuing and the Iranian side is playing the role of mediator. We hope that the truce we declared here will help the efforts of the Iranian brothers.

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[Qurrah-Daghi] It is understood, however, that the two Kurdish delegations did not meet together.

[Barzani] This is true. I do not believe they will meet in this phase.

[Qurrah-Daghi] Does this mean that their meeting was not scheduled?

[Barzani] We did not schedule a meeting between our delegation and the other party's delegation. Our delegation left for Tehran to listen to the Iranian views and, through the Iranians, to the PUK views, as well as to convey our views to the PUK.

Refugees: PKK Not Being Sheltered

NC1304203495 Paris AFP in English 1634 GMT 13 Apr 95

[Report by Tolle Aram]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Atrush, Iraq, April 13 (AFP)—Refugees and aid workers denied Thursday [13 April] that two UN camps here are sheltering Kurdish PKK [Kurdistan Workers Party] fighters as Turkey sharply warned against the presence of even one rebel.

About 13,000 people, half of them children, who have fled from their villages in southeastern Turkey across border mountains into northern Iraq since March 1994, are housed in tents in the two camps.

Turkey has repeatedly charged that guerrillas from the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) are hiding in the camp, 160 kilometres (90 miles) east of the Iraqi border town of Zakho and outside the zone occupied by Turkish troops since March 20.

"The situation of the Atrush camp is serious. There are numerous indications of the presence of terrorists in this camp," a Turkish diplomat in Ankara said Thursday.

"If even one terrorist is in the camp it will reduce the UN's credibility to zero. It has to assure us" that there are none," he added.

But residents in the camps, which are spread over a wide plain close to the road between Zakho and the main Kurdish town of Irbil, vehemently denied the charges.

"All the individuals between five and 90 living in our camps, are PKK followers. That's normal because the PKK fights for the Kurdish cause.

"But there aren't any PKK leaders or a single armed PKK militiaman hiding here," said Husayn, a member of the camps committee.

John Andrew, an emergency response officer with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees who was sent to northern Iraq two weeks ago to organise the camp, said: "I have never seen any weapons in either camp A or B."

But the charges have left workers and refugees alert to a possible attack by Turkish troops despite a promise by Ankara that it would not hit the camps.

Refugees have dug ditches in case of any Turkish air raids and lights and fires are banned at night, a young woman told AFP.

Andrew added that since Ankara poured more than 30,000 troops into northern Iraq to flush out PKK rebels using it as a base to launch attacks on Turkey, "someone from a foreign aid organisation has remained here every night."

Turkish journalists have also been banned from the camp after they reported that PKK fighters were hiding there.

"They gave us a lot of trouble because such claims could be used to justify any Turkish attack on us," Husayn added.

The UNHCR plans to start building homes for the refugees from southeast Turkey where the PKK fighters have centred their battle for an independent Kurdish homeland since 1984.

Some 3,000 houses are to be built for the 2,458 refugee families and 10 schools have already been set up in double tents.

One teacher 'Ahmad Ali said: "It is a pleasure for us to teach for the first time in our mother tongue which is Kurdish and not Turkish."

Meanwhile, the Turkish army said 10 PKK fighters were killed late Wednesday bringing the death toll of separatists to 427 since the launch of the massive military operation in northern Iraq on March 20.

Colonel Dogu Silahcioglu in the southeastern town of Diyarbakir said three Turkish soldiers had also been killed in the past three days, bringing the army losses to 39.

Turkish Army Accused of Killing Civilians

NC1404103495 Paris AFP in English 0915 GMT 14 Apr 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baghdad, April 14 (AFP)—Baghdad accused Turkish troops on Friday [14 April] of killing 12 Iraqi civilians in a huge military offensive against Kurdish rebels in northern Iraq and demanded an immediate army withdrawal.

It was the first time Baghdad has reported killings of its nationals since Ankara sent more than 30,000 soldiers into northern Iraq on March 20 to hunt down Turkish Kurd separatists from the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK).

A foreign ministry spokesman, quoted by newspapers, said Turkish soldiers had "murdered 12 Iraqis before robbing them," without specifying when or where the alleged killings took place.

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The Turkish "aggressors have turned schools in northern Iraq into concentration camps," the spokesman added.

"The Turkish government is entirely responsible for these violations and inhuman actions and must immediately withdraw" its troops from northern Iraq.

Ankara has pledged not to harm Iraqi civilians in its offensive, though Iraqi Kurds who control the north have reported casualties.

The army said Thursday it had killed 427 PKK rebels since the start of the operation.

Diplomat Views Anti-Iraq 'Media Campaign'

JN1304134795 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0739 GMT 13 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] London, 13 Apr (INA)—Zuhayr Ibrahim, head of the Iraqi interests section in London, has said the Western media campaign launched by the British news media, particularly THE TIMES and THE SUNDAY TIMES, is aimed at justifying the continuation of the unjust economic blockade imposed on Iraq.

At a news conference he held at the Iraqi Embassy building in London, he added: The report published by THE TIMES claimed that the Kurds were used in conducting chemical tests. THE SUNDAY TIMES claimed that Iraq has kidnapped a nuclear expert. Both are exposed lies aimed at disrupting the stands of the states supporting Iraq and calling for lifting the unjust blockade. These claims are also aimed at covering the Turkish operations in northern Iraq.

Head of the Iraqi interests section ridiculed the claims that Iraq was trying to restore its nuclear program, saying: Ekeus himself has denied these claims. He stressed the efficiency of the monitoring system that was installed with the full cooperation of Iraq, which has fulfilled all its international obligations. He described the alleged kidnapping of an Iraqi nuclear scientist in Athens as a big lie whose objectives are exposed. He said this is a piece of propaganda from the U.S., which is hostile to the Iraqi government and people. He denied that Iraq has concealed any biological materials, or that it has any programs to manufacture biological weapons.

He noted that Ekeus' report serves U.S. plans to maintain the blockade at a time when many states, particularly France, Russia, and China, call for lifting the blockade because Iraq has fulfilled its obligations. He expressed the hope that Britain will change its stand in light of the British public's growing concern about the continuation of blockade, and their sympathy with the Iraqi people's demands. He said THE TIMES has a history of publishing fabricated reports about Iraq, but refuses to publish the Iraqi replies that reveal the full truth and expose the paper's stand.

Answering a question on Iraq's stand toward the Turkish operations, Zuhayr Ibrahim said: Iraq has denounced the Turkish expedition and invasion of northern Iraq, and called on Turkey to immediately withdraw its forces. Instead of invading, it should promote bilateral cooperation to achieve security and stability in the region.

On the current pilgrimage season, he noted: Iraq cannot send its pilgrims this year due to the continuation of the aggressive and unjust economic blockade imposed on it, and due to some states' refusal, particularly Saudi Arabia and other states, to release part of Iraq's frozen assets to finance the pilgrims.

He said: Iraq rejected Resolutions 706 and 712 because they flagrantly interfere in Iraq's internal affairs and violate its national sovereignty. These resolutions entrench the partitioning of Iraq. Out of this entire process, the Iraqi citizen will only get $7 per month. He stressed that Iraq calls on the UN Security Council to fulfill its obligations and implement Paragraph 22 of Resolution 687 since its has implemented all UN resolutions.

Zuhayr Ibrahim, chief of the Iraqi interests section denied Iraq is trying to build its nuclear program or any other arms programs. He said: The objective of this campaign is to influence the stands of the states calling for the lifting of the blockade. The monitoring program is operational now and Iraq is cooperating in this regard, as Ekeus admitted. Ekeus himself denied the existence of nuclear programs.

In an interview with the BBC Arabic section, the Iraqi interests section chief said Iraq imported biological materials for purely medical purposes, some of which was used at hospitals. The rest was destroyed as a result of the destruction campaign during the chapter of treachery and treason. He stressed that Iraq cannot maintain materials that have such a short expiration date. He said the media campaign escalates every time the date of reviewing the blockade approaches, or international support for Iraq's position increases, particularly among UN Security Council members.

Regarding the continuing British support for the U.S. position, particularly toward Iraq, he expressed the belief that this is attributed to internal circumstances in both countries, adding: Despite this, there are immense pressures by the British public opinion, businessmen, and merchants to force the British government to change its stand and return to the Iraqi market.

About the Arab League's role, he expressed regret about the league's failure to play any role in favor of Iraq. He said: So far, the Arab League has not acknowledged its duty toward Iraq because it falls under the influence of some of its members. He expressed the hope that it will play its role as a league for all Arabs.

Answering a question about Iraq's relations with Qatar and the Sultanate of Oman, he said: Our relations with both countries are good. We hope these relations will reflect positively on the other region's states.

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On Iraq's continued building of palaces, he stressed that these are the people's palaces, and that Iraq, just like any other states, has the right to build what it deems good for its people.

Ambassador to Austria on 'Missing' Bacteria Solutions

AU1304125995 Vienna DER STANDARD in German 13 Apr 95 p 2

[Interview with Ambassador to Austria Rahim al-Kital by Gudrun Harrer; place and date not given: "The Missing Material Expired Long Ago"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Harrer] The report of the UN armament inspectors accuses Iraq of being unable to provide information on the whereabouts of 17 metric tons of nutrient solutions for bacteria cultures. Where have they disappeared to?

[Al-Kital] First of all, a general statement: Everyone reads what he needs into such a report. Someone who is well disposed toward Iraq gathers from it that Iraq is not able to produce mass destruction weapons. However, he who wants to construe something against Iraq, as is obviously the case here, falls back on points like the missing nutrient solutions.

You see, the question is of purely academic interest. The material in question, part of which was used in hospitals and part of which disappeared in the unrest after the war, passed its expiry date long ago—one part in 1992, another in 1993—and therefore it cannot be used any longer.

[Harrer] Can this expiry date be proven?

[Al-Kital] Of course, by those who exported this material then. In your opinion, from where does the commission get all its information?

However, if one is set on it, one will find such points again and again, and the whole affair will become a never-ending story. But exactly for this reason, Resolution 751 was adopted: The things that were supposed to be and were actually achieved by Resolution 687—to deprive Iraq of the possibility to produce mass destruction weapons—are being checked continuously. However, checking does not mean the maintenance of the sanctions, but for its inspections, the United Nations has its massive control apparatus in Iraq, which works day and night. Nobody would prevent the United Nations from taking measures again if it were to find something wrong.

Commission head Rolf Ekeus also states explicitly in the report that the information of the U.S. Administration that Iraq is working on the reestablishment of some plants where chemical weapons might be produced are wrong.

[Harrer] Why did Baghdad again not accept this time the proposal to sell oil valued at $2 billion under UN control every six months, the profits of which would directly benefit the Iraqi people?

[Al-Kital] First of all, this regulation, which was proposed in a similar form in 1991, does not make allowance for the efforts that we made in the fulfillment of the resolutions in the past few years. We fail to see why, considering all that we have done, we should go back three years.

Second, we already rejected this regulation at that time because it de facto divides Iraq in two parts—the middle and the south on the one hand and the north, where it would not take effect, on the other—which we regard as a violation of Iraq's sovereignty. Just as the proposals of controlled sale, purchase, and distribution, treat Iraq, in fact, like some kind of UN protectorate, which is unacceptable to us.

By the way, in the same way, we sharply condemn the invasion of northern Iraq by Turkish troops as a violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq. Turkey itself caused the power vacuum in northern Iraq, which it talks about all the time, by supporting the war.

[Harrer] It is said again and again that Iraq can buy medicine and food unhindered. Why is the humanitarian situation nevertheless so disastrous?

[Al-Kital] We simply do not have money! The inflation in Iraq is enormous, the U.S. dollar is currently 1,000 dinars (before the war, 1 dinar was $3—the editors) and our accounts abroad are largely frozen.

Spanish Delegation, Doctors Arrive in Baghdad

NC1304202095 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1850 GMT 13 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 13 Apr (MENA)—The Spanish industrial delegation headed by Juan Antonio Bayul [name as transliterated] arrived in Baghdad tonight at the invitation of the Ministry of Industry and Minerals.

During its visit the delegation will be informed of the results of the oppressive siege imposed on the Iraqi people. It will also hold meetings to discuss ways to reduce the effects of the continuing siege.

The delegation consists of 28 members representing 30 companies from various specializations, as well as doctors specializing in eye and bone surgery.

The delegation will organize a stand at the Ministry of Industry and Minerals' wing of the Baghdad International Fair. The doctors among the delegation will carry out surgery and medical examinations of Iraqi patients.

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Beilin: al-Shar' Remarks May Be 'Historic Mistake'

TA1304164095 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1505 GMT 13 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Deputy Foreign Minister Beilin has reacted to remarks made by Syria's Faruq al-Shar' by saying that they are a mistake by Syria, a mistake which may prove to be a historic one, and that everybody will pay for it. He added that he was indeed right when he was doubting whether Syria had chosen peace. He told our political correspondent Shlomo Raz that we should still not rush to mourn the chances for peace with Syria:

[Begin recording] [Beilin] In my opinion, we have about seven and a half months during which a breakthrough with Syria can be achieved. The so-called threat that there will not be high-level military talks is not a penalty for Israel. It is first and foremost a form of punishment for the Syrian nation which, I believe and hope, does not want a continued state of war between the two countries. I hope that the Syrian leadership will sober up and understand the opportunity lying here for both their nation and ours to reach peace. I hope that instead of exchanging slogans through the media, the Syrian leadership will sit down to the negotiating table as soon as possible.

[Raz] They must have had their considerations. For a fact, the Syrian foreign minister today came out with an unequivocal announcement that the talks would not be upgraded to the level of chiefs of staff.

[Beilin] Well, I truly believe this is a Syrian mistake which may be a historic mistake, and all of us—the Syrians, the Israelis, and everybody who desires peace in this region—will pay for it. I asked my question a few months ago about al-Asad's strategic decision. To my regret, I believe I was right, that such a decision has not been made yet, and it seems to me that this is the time to make a strategic and courageous decision to pursue the peace process. We can also live without peace with Syria, by keeping up the peace process with the Palestinians and continuing to maintain peace with Jordan and Egypt, but we also have to understand that there cannot be a comprehensive peace in the region without peace with Syria and Lebanon.

[Raz] Your question on whether Syria indeed decided to pursue peace—should it not be turned into an exclamation, namely, that Syria has decided not to pursue a peace move?

[Beilin] No, I do not have proof for such a statement. I think there are hesitations in Syria. I think that Syria has not yet made a decisive resolution, and it is indeed a pity that it has not made it. [end recording]

Jordanian Ambassador on Gaza Situation, Hamas

TA1304185295 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Arabic 1530 GMT 13 Apr 95

[Interview with Marwan al-Mu'ashshir, Jordanian ambassador to Israel, by correspondents Me'ir Kohen and Shlomo Ganor in the studio; date not given; from the weekly "Encounter" program—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Ganor] Mr. ambassador, let us now move on to the Palestinian issue. What is your comment on what is currently taking place in the Gaza Strip in terms of the campaign of detentions being conducted by the Palestinian Authority [PA] against Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and Islamic Jihad elements? And will the security situation in the Gaza Strip be resolved and brought under control?

[Al-Mu'ashshir] First of all, Jordan does not interfere in the internal affairs of the Palestinian National Authority [PNA]. The PNA takes any measures it deems fit to create a suitable security situation. Jordan supports the PNA in what it is doing. We firmly believe that the PNA and his excellency President Yasir 'Arafat are fully committed to the peace process. We support them in everything they do. Obviously, we strongly condemn terrorist acts and do not condone them in any way. They do not serve the peace process. At the same time, however, we say that such acts cannot be completely halted despite all the security measures that are adopted. You are aware that Israel was in Gaza, and it, too, could not stop such terrorist operations. In our view, the only solution lies in accelerating the peace process and creating a suitable climate so that such operations will not be acceptable to anyone and so that the solution will be a just one in which the citizen feels that the political problems have been resolved. As I said, the carriage of peace is moving in one direction. The PNA is in this carriage, we are in it, and Israeli is in it. It is in the interest of everyone to cooperate and accelerate the peace process so that we will be able to implement the Oslo accord in all its stages by conducting elections in the West Bank and creating a climate that differs from the current one.

[Kohen] Hamas and Islamic Jihad are acting overtly in Jordan. PA head Yasir 'Arafat has called on King Husayn to limit and restrict this activity. Will Jordan comply with this request?

[Al-Mu'ashshir] Hamas has no activity in Jordan. This should also be clear. There are Jordanian figures who express their views with regard to Hamas' activities in the West Bank. As I said, Jordanian laws allow expression of opinion. If any harm is done in this expression or if it surpasses the line allowed within bounds of the law, I have no doubt that the Jordanian Government will adopt the appropriate measures against anyone who breaks the Jordanian law. As for the statement that Hamas conducts military or even political activity in Jordan, this is not true.

[Ganor] This is not an Israeli statement. Yasir 'Arafat has officially said that Hamas has its headquarters in Amman.

[Al-Mu'ashshir] As I said, there are some Jordanian figures who sympathize with Hamas, and there are some

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figures who make some statements that are sympathetic to Hamas. If these statements are within bounds of the law, in Jordan there is political pluralism, and within the framework of its laws it cannot silence anyone who wishes to express his opinion. If, however, the matter goes beyond this to the extent of breaking the law, the government will adopt the appropriate measures.

[Ganor] With regard to the issue of Israeli-Palestinian-Jordanian relations, the question is: How do you view the potential solution? For example, there is the confederation or federation plan. What is Jordan's current view, in 1995, in the aftermath of the PA's establishment and the Israeli-Jordanian peace treaty?

[Al-Mu'ashshir] In fact, confederation or other terms have lost their meaning at present. We feel in Jordan that it is very premature to talk about any future plans before the Palestinian people achieve their right to express their opinion and their political right in exercising all their rights over their land. After this takes place and after the Arab-Israeli conflict is resolved comprehensively—of course, the Palestinian-Israeli c?nflict in particular—freedom of expression will be left to the Jordanian and Palestinian peoples. But now we cannot talk about any formula, be it confederation, federation, or otherwise before we actually see the outlines of a final solution and before the Palestinian people are able to express their opinion. I have no close cooperation in the future. We cannot, however, determine the frameworks, bases, and formulas of this cooperation. Therefore, we say that there should be absolutely no talk now about confederation until the Palestinian people achieve their right.

[Kohen] Mr. Ambassador, the Israeli-Jordanian peace treaty gave Jordan priority in the custody of holy shrines in Jerusalem. This issue created a crisis in Jordanian-Palestinian relations. What is Jordan's position in terms of the custody of holy shrines in general and in Jerusalem in particular?

[Al-Mu'ashshir] The fact is that the Jerusalem issue probably created a very exaggerated sensitivity. We overcame this sensitivity after we held discussions with the Palestinian side. I believe that now the issue is very clear. First of all, as you know what the treaty and the Washington Declaration stipulated in terms of religious custody by Jordan and its status in Jerusalem was a confirmation of the status quo. There was nothing new in that. We had reached agreement with the Palestinian side over this issue, even after the disengagement, on the need to protect the holy sites in Jerusalem and not create a vacuum that could be exploited. Our position on this issue was clear. At present we are in charge of religious custody in Jerusalem until, God willing, the Palestinians can regain their sovereignty over East Jerusalem. We firmly believe—and our stance is clear—that it is an indivisible part of the occupied Arab territories and that it should return to Arab sovereignty....

[Kohen, interrupting] And is there Palestinian consent on this?

[Al-Mu'ashshir] There is Palestinian consent. After this happens, sovereignty will be transferred to the Palestinian side. Naturally, we are not talking at all about political sovereignty. Politically, Jerusalem is an indivisible part of the occupied Arab territories, and it is a Palestinian responsibility. The Palestinian side is the only one authorized to negotiate with the Israeli side over the future of the city. [passage omitted]

Netanyahu: IDF, Not 'Arafat, Must Lead Antiterror Fight

TA1204163695 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1500 GMT 12 Apr 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Earlier today, Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin called it a lie to link suicide bombings with the Oslo accord with the PLO, saying such attacks occurred beforehand as well. Likud Chairman Binyamin Netanyahu responded to the premier in this interview with David Ze'ev:

[Begin recording] [Netanyahu] There may have been isolated cases of suicide attacks, but not this plethora, this veritable outpour of suicide attacks. Now, this explosion of attacks is due to the fact that the organizers of the suicide bombers, the people who inculcate the terrorists, are the people who provide them with explosives, the people who give them the targets. All these people, who don't want to die, have in fact complete immunity in Gaza. Gaza has become a terrorist haven for terrorists, both the conventional type and the suicide types, and there they can plot and hatch their various schemes for murder with virtual immunity and impunity. That has to change.

And what we have argued, and I was glad to see that six members of the Knesset faction of Labor have agreed, is that we can no longer rely on 'Arafat—we never believed we could anyway—and that we must return the initiative and the freedom of action to the IDF [Israel Defense Forces]. This is the big change that is required. We must begin to fight terrorism and not rely on 'Arafat to fight it for us.

[Ze'ev] To what extent do you want the army to operate in Gaza: to take the Gaza Strip over again?

[Netanyahu] No, I don't think we should reoccupy Gaza—I have said that quite clearly—but I think we should make it clear to terrorists in Gaza, as we make it clear to terrorists in Lebanon and elsewhere, anywhere in the Arab world, in fact, anywhere in the world: You are not immune. You will always have no place to hide. You will have no place that will be considered immune from our retribution. When you declare that Gaza is safe from Israeli action, you are effectively telling the terrorists: Go ahead, plan the next damn murder, plan the next bombing; nothing will happen to you. That, of course, must lead to the explosion of terrorism that we have witnessed since Oslo.

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[Ze'ev] The Palestinian Authority says it has arrested hundreds of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and Islamic Jihad activists. Do you not take that seriously?

[Netanyahu] I am hardly impressed. 'Arafat has a regular cadre of several hundred people that he arrests for a day or two and then releases. He has not taken any serious action against the Hamas. He now says that he will dismantle the Hamas; that he will not disarm them; in fact, that he would leave them with sidearms, meaning Kalashnikov rifles, pistols, grenades, explosives. I am sure he would disarm them if they had tanks and artillery, but as you know, these are not the weapons of the terrorists. So effectively, to rely on 'Arafat, the archterrorist of our time, to fight terrorism against us is preposterous. [end recording]

Over 4,000 Illegally-Issued PA Passports Confiscated

TA1304190595 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1800 GMT 13 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] This afternoon, the Israeli authorities confiscated 4,080 passports issued by the Palestinian Authority [PA]. A Waqf representative had tried to get the passports across the border to Jordan to hand them out there to residents of Judaea, Samaria, and Jerusalem who were on pilgrimage to Mecca.

Security sources told our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem that this is a gross violation of the agreements between Israel and the PLO which allow the distribution of PA passports only to residents of the autonomy. Major General Oren Shahor, coordinator of government activities in the territories, made it clear last week to a PA representative that it is forbidden to issue Palestinian passports to Israel's residents. Saudi Arabia has announced that, this year, it will allow the Palestinians, including Israeli Arabs, to go on Hajj to Mecca only if they arrive with a Palestinian passport.

[Jerusalem Israel Television Network Channel 1 in Arabic at 1600 GMT on 13 April reports that "the Saudi authorities agreed to allow Israeli Muslim pilgrims to travel to Saudi Arabia to perform the Hajj ceremonies via Jordan and with Jordanian entry visas, as had been the custom in previous years."]

Territories To Close at 'Midnight,' Reopen 23 Apr

TA1304182895 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1800 GMT 13 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The closure imposed on the territories will start at midnight tonight [2100 GMT on 13 April] and will last until after the end of the Passover holiday week [23 April]. Our police affairs correspondent Aviv Bushinsky reports that the prime minister has accepted the recommendation of the Police Affairs Ministry and ordered that the closure be extended. The police are considering allowing certain exceptions to the closure, in accordance with the security situation as it is estimated to be during the holidays.

Hebron Under Curfew; Passover Week Security Detailed

TA1404045295 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0400 GMT 14 Apr 95

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Israeli security forces went on high alert at midnight along the frontiers on both sides of the Green Line and on the coast. A curfew has been imposed on Hebron and the road between Hebron and Halhul. The army told Qol Yisra'el this was for security reasons with the approach of the Passover festival.

The closure on the territories will remain in force throughout the Passover holiday, but will be eased slightly from Sunday to Friday to allow entry of Palestinian agricultural produce and a limited number of workers.

In addition, security has been tightened at Israeli diplomatic missions and Jewish institutions overseas following warnings that there could be terrorist attacks. Here in Israel the authorities suspect that the terrorists could attempt a high-profile act of terrorism during the holiday. [passage omitted]

Finance Minister Meets Li Peng, Extends Invitation

TA1204135395 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1200 GMT 12 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Chinese Prime Minister Li Peng has accepted an invitation from Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin to visit Israel. He will come at the earliest possibility, apparently still this year, the Chinese premier told Finance Minister Avraham Shohat, who conferred with him in Beijing this morning at Li Peng's request.

Shohat handed the Chinese prime minister a message from Prime Minister Rabin on the peace process and spoke with him on the subject.

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Minister Rejects Blaming Country for 'Terror' Acts

JN1404061595 Amman Radio Jordan in English 0430 GMT 14 Apr 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Foreign Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti has asserted that Jordan categorically rejects any statements or hints coming out of certain sides in their attempts to blame responsibility for some acts of terror on parties working in or from Jordan.

In a press statement, Mr. al-Kabariti said Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] is a Palestinian movement whose activities fall within the boundaries of the Palestinian self-rule authority and the occupied Palestinian lands.

Mr. al-Kabariti added that Jordan refuses to be held responsible for any activities that have nothing to do with a legalized Jordanian party or if Jordan was not a party to it. He added that Jordan will not allow any political gathering to operate within Jordan without legal permission and within the Constitution and after rejecting violence.

Foreign Minister, Kuwaiti Counterpart Hold Talks

JN1304162095 Amman AL-ASWAQ in Arabic 13-14 Apr 95 pp 1, 15

["Exclusive" report]

[FBIS Translated Text] AL-ASWAQ has learned from official sources that U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher extended an official invitation to Foreign Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti to visit the United States on [Monday] 17 April in order to complete Jordanian-U.S. talks on the peace process and the issue of writing off Jordan's debts.

The sources noted that al-Kabariti held discussions with Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa to coordinate between the two sides before his meeting with Christopher in New York.

The same sources did not rule out that al-Kabariti will meet with Musa in Cairo during the next few days to prepare joint guidelines on the New York meeting.

On another level, well-informed Arab diplomatic sources in Amman revealed that there has been a breakthrough in Kuwaiti-Jordanian relations. The sources said Foreign Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti—who considers Arab reconciliation one of Jordan's most important diplomatic files—met on the sidelines of the Arab League's 50th anniversary celebrations with Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jabir al-Sabah, Kuwaiti deputy prime minister and foreign minister. The two sides discussed ways to clear the Arab atmosphere in general, and the Jordanian-Kuwaiti atmosphere in particular.

The sources noted that the Kuwaiti side expressed its satisfaction with Jordan's political discourse. It also showed enthusiasm about normalizing relations between the two sides during the next stage, beginning with the reopening of the Jordanian Embassy in Kuwait, the appointment of a Kuwaiti ambassador to Jordan, the discussion of relations between the Jordanian and Kuwaiti peoples, and culminating in official meetings between the two sides at the highest levels.

The sources said that during the Arab League's meetings, Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad demanded that Minister al-Kabariti's speech be considered one of the Arab League's documents since it represents a joint and calm Arab speech and is a serious call for clearing the Arab atmosphere.

It is noteworthy that the meeting between Sabah al-Ahmad and al-Kabariti was held through the Bahraini foreign minister.

Foreign Minister Meets New Bosnian Charge D'Affaires

JN1304165095 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 13 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti received in his office today the Bosnian charge d'affaires who arrived in Amman a few days ago. during the meeting, the two sides discussed the latest developments in Bosnia and plans to end the armed conflict there. The foreign minister voiced Jordan's concern about the plight of the Bosnian people and urged the end of their suffering.

Minister: Iraq Talks Focus on Pipeline, Refinery

JN1304190995 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 13 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Samih Darwazah, minister of energy and mineral resources, has returned to Amman from Baghdad after leading a delegation on a visit to Iraq which lasted several days. During the visit, the delegation held talks with officials in the Iraqi Ministries of Oil, Trade, Industry, and Transport. Talks covered bilateral relations in the fields of energy and transporting Iraqi oil to Jordan.

The minister said that talks dealt with means to transport Iraqi oil to Jordan due to the high cost of transporting it at this time. This is especially true because its transportation in truck tankers is arduous and cannot be relied on strategically. He added that the two sides agreed to conduct studies dealing with the construction of a pipeline to transport crude oil from Iraq to al-Zarqa'. They also agreed to increase prospects of cooperation in the field of oil refining and discussed the possibility of building a new refinery in al-'Aqabah because Jordan Oil Refinery's oil derivatives are not enough.

The delegation which accompanied the minister comprised Engineer Ahmad Bashir, acting secretary general of the Ministry of Energy and Engineer Khalid al-Shiyyab, director of oil in the Natural Resources Authority.

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Syria's al-Shar' Concludes Meetings, Visit

Says Elections Should Not Hinder Talks

NC1304131795 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1135 GMT 13 Apr 95

[Report by Yazbik Wahbah in B'abda Palace—live]

[FBIS Translated Text] An approximately 45-minute meeting between Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' and President Ilyas al-Hirawi ended a short time ago. Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri, Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri, and Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz also attended the meeting.

Minister al-Shar' quoted Dennis Ross, the U.S. coordinator of the Middle East peace process, as saying that his country is interested in continuing the peace process. Al-Shar' added that he delivered a message from Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad to President al-Hirawi.

Al-Shar' denied that a meeting will be held between the Syrian and Israeli chiefs of staffs in Washington in the near future. He reiterated an earlier assertion that Israel is blocking a solution. Explaining that Israel used its naval blockade to put pressure on Lebanon, al-Shar' expressed admiration for the Lebanese people's steadfastness and declared that this Israeli action would not influence Syria and Lebanon.

[Begin recording] [al-Shar'] If there is a deadlock, the blame should not be laid at Syria's door because the Syrian position is clear. It is committed to the peace process and its requirements. It is Israel that has impeded the prospect of achieving positive results during Dennis Ross' tour.

[Correspondent] Minister, the current faltering of the negotiations is linked to the U.S. and Israeli elections. They appear to be [words indistinct].

[Al-Shar'] We do not link the peace process to any impending elections, whether in the United States or Israel. Peace is an important objective, not a mere electoral issue. It concerns all the region's countries and the world. If Israel is making electoral calculations, we believe that the attainment of a just and comprehensive peace would be a positive, not a negative point in the next elections.

[Correspondent] What specific points halted the peace negotiations or [words indistinct]?

[Al-Shar'] The basic points dealt with the aims and principles of the security arrangements and striking a balance and a parity between the two parties. These principles are internationally accepted. No country can ask another to concede the parity principle when any security arrangements are made. This is why our adherence to those principles cannot be regarded as intransigence or stubbornness. This is a fair demand that forms a firm foundation for security arrangements between erstwhile warring countries that wish to move on to a state of real peace.

[Correspondent] [Question indistinct]

[Al-Shar'] When Secretary Christopher was in the region and later the U.S. coordinator Dennis Ross visited the Middle East, the United States affirmed that it is interested in continuing the peace process because this peace is one of its top priorities. [end recording]

Holds News Conference

JN1404072195 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0435 GMT 14 Apr 95

[From the "News Reports" program]

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' paid a short visit to Beirut yesterday, during which, he conveyed a message from President Hafiz al-Asad to Lebanese President Ilyas al-Hirawi. The meeting was attended by Lebanese Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri and Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri.

Minister al-Shar' held a news conference after the meeting in which he spoke about many topics. Following are the proceedings of this news conference:

[Begin recording] [No introductory question as heard] [al- Shar'] The message deals with coordination between the two sisterly countries and the results of U.S. Peace Coordinator Dennis Ross's tour.

[Unidentified correspondent] Your Excellency: It seems that the talks have reached a deadlock. [Words indistinct]

[Al-Shar'] If there is a deadlock, the blame should not be laid at Syria's door because the Syrian position is clear. It is committed to the peace process and its requirements. It is Israel that has impeded the prospect of achieving positive results during Dennis Ross's tour.

[Correspondent] Your Excellency, the current faltering of the negotiations is linked to the U.S. and Israeli elections. So, it seems that the negotiations are moving in a vicious circle and any progress in the talks is delayed. What is your view regarding this?

[Al-Shar'] We do not link the peace process to any impending elections, whether in the United States or Israel. Peace is an important objective, not a mere electoral issue. It concerns all the region's countries and the world. If Israel is making electoral calculations, we believe that the attainment of a just and comprehensive peace would be a positive, not a negative point in the next elections.

[Correspondent] What specific points halted the peace negotiations or achieving positive results?

[Al-Shar'] The basic points dealt with the aims and principles of the security arrangements and striking a balance [tawazun], reciprocity [taqabul], and equality

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[musawah]. These principles are internationally accepted. No country can ask another to concede the equality principle when any security arrangements are made. This is why our adherence to those principles cannot be regarded as intransigence or stubbornness. This is a fair demand that forms a firm foundation for security arrangements between erstwhile warring countries that wish to move on to a state of real peace.

[Correspondent] [Question indistinct]

[Al-Shar'] When Secretary Christopher was in the region and later U.S. Coordinator Dennis Ross visited the Middle East, the United States affirmed that it is interested in continuing the peace process because this peace is one of its top priorities.

[Correspondent] Your Excellency, do you believe that the stumbling talks will have a negative effect on the situation in southern Lebanon in light of the Israeli siege?

[Al-Shar'] Israel's attempts in the past and now—in terms of aggressions, shelling civilians and peaceful villages in southern Lebanon, and the siege of the southern Lebanese coast—have failed. All these attempts do not constitute any pressure on us and, we believe, they will achieve no gains for Israel. On the contrary, the fraternal Lebanese people are united in confronting these aggressions. Also, the international community is surprised at Israel's continuous aggressions, particularly since we are involved in a peace process. Such acts will be reflected on Israel itself, not Syria or Lebanon.

[Correspondent] Your Excellency, will the chiefs of staff go to Washington soon. The other question: Will the talks on the Lebanese track resume soon?

[Al-Shar'] Regarding the first question, the chiefs of staff will not go to Washington because no agreement has been reached on the principles of security arrangements, as I explained a short while ago. As for the resumption of the talks on the Lebanese track, as I said in an earlier statement, what is taking place now, or what took place during the past period, in the two ambassadors' meetings—under the sponsorship and with the participation of the United States—as well as Christopher's and Dennis Ross's tour aimed at resolving this point in particular, that is, the principles of security arrangements and reaching an agreement on them.

We believe that when we reach a common understanding of the principles of security arrangements, both tracks, the Lebanese and Syrian, will naturally resume the talks in Washington.

[Correspondent] Your Excellency, with the current stumbling talks and the failure of Ross's tour, do you expect any breakthrough in the peace process?

[Al-Shar'] We hope there will be a breakthrough in the peace process. I said that the process is being obstructed because of Israel's attempt to achieve gains and privileges in the security arrangements, something we cannot accept. [end recording]

Concludes Visit, Departs

NC1304133395 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1300 GMT 13 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] We have just been informed that the Lebanese-Syrian talks ended a short while ago. Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' left the B'abda Palace for Damascus at the end of the talks.

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Al-Asad Receives U.S. Senator Brown

JN1304161695 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1515 GMT 13 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad received Hank Brown, chairman of the U.S. Senate's Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs Subcommittee, at the People's Palace at 1300 today. U.S. Ambassador in Damascus Christopher Ross attended.

The talks addressed the Middle East peace process and the efforts made by the United States, sponsor of the peace process, to achieve peace.

Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' received Brown this morning. The meeting was attended by the U.S. ambassador in Damascus. The talks addressed the regional state of affairs, the peace process, and the causes of its failure to make progress. Al-Shar' and Brown also reviewed Syrian-U.S. ties.

Army Chief Not To Participate in Washington Talks

NC1304163295 Paris AFP in English 1523 GMT 13 Apr 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Beirut, April 13 (AFP) - Syria on Thursday [13 April] ruled out the participation of Syrian and Israeli army chiefs at peace talks in Washington until a deal is reached on security arrangements on the Golan Heights.

Ambassador-level talks resumed last month to try to agree security arrangements to accompany an eventual Israeli withdrawal on the Golan and the United States had hoped the army chiefs would soon join the negotiations.

However, Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' said that Syria's Hikmat al-Shihabi and his Israeli counterpart Amnon Shahaq "will not go to Washington to take part in the negotiations which are going on between the ambassadors of the two countries because there has been no agreement on security arrangements."

Syria has demanded equal measures but Israel, which occupied the strategic plateau in 1967, is opposed to any such proposals arguing it is much smaller.

Instead it has called for a demilitarised zone on the Syrian side of the heights to be nine times bigger than one on Israeli territory.

Al-Shar', talking to journalists at the end of talks with Lebanese leaders on the shuttle earlier this month by US Middle East coordinator Dennis Ross, said Syria's position was not a "mark of stubborness."

"No state can ask another to abandon this principle of equality which is internationally recognised."

Damascus demands were "fair and comprise an essential platform to reach security arrangements between two countries in a state of war which want a real peace," he added.

Army chiefs-of-staff first met secretly in Washington in December but no progress was made in the negotiations which have mainly stumbled over the scope and timetable of an Israeli withdrawal from the heights.

Al-Shar' blamed Israel for the lack of progress and the failure of Ross's mission.

"If the path is blocked, the responsibility does not fall on Syria, whose position is clear, but on Israel which has prevented this tour achieving any positive results."

Israel and the United States have warned that 1995 is a crucial year in trying to seal a deal as next year both countries face general elections, which the ruling parties may lose.

"We are not linking the peace process to any electoral defeats," al-Shar' said, but added that a peace deal could be a "plus point" in the Israeli vote.

Syria on Tuesday backed anti-Israeli attacks by Palestinian militants as "legitimate" actions by "people struggling against occupation, two days after a double suicide bombing in the Gaza Strip killed eight people.

The Al-Ba'th daily said the suicide operations were "proof of the failure of the accord on Palestinian autonomy."

Al-Shar' also handed over a message from Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad to his Lebanese counterpart Ilyas al-Hirawi.

AL-THAWRAH: Rabin 'Destroyed' Peace Process

JN1404101895 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0450 GMT 14 Apr 95

[From the press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] In one of its commentaries today, AL-THAWRAH speaks about Israel's continued rejection of the peace principles. In this context, the paper refers to Yitzhaq Rabin's repeated refusal to return to the 4 June 1967 lines.

AL-THAWRAH says: As is Israel's habit, Rabin has once again destroyed all the foundations and pillars of the peace process, which is based on full Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories, in conformity with the Security Council resolutions and the land-for-peace principle, as stipulated in the U.S. initiative.

The paper adds: When Rabin declares this, he seeks intentionally to destroy the peace process, especially since he has deliberately violated the principles of the Madrid peace process and because he knows full well that this talk is rejected. Syria has asserted that it can never accept anything short of full withdrawal.

AL-THAWRAH stresses that Syria can never accept anything short of full withdrawal from the Golan and southern Lebanon and setting up equal [mutasawiyah] and parallel [mutawaziyah] security arrangements on

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both sides of the 4 June 1967 lines, as a prelude to the achievement of peace. Any attempt outside this framework is an effort on the part of Israel to obstruct the peace process.

The paper concludes: Syria is satisfied with its position, because it is a sound position that embodies the aspirations of the Arab masses and expresses the will of true peace. Everybody must eventually return to this position. This is not the first time that everybody acknowledges the soundness of Syria's position. Supporting this position, thus, confirms the comprehensive and astute vision of the leader of Syria and the Arab nation, President Hafiz al-Asad, who adopts the right position at the right time and place.

In another commentary, AL-THAWRAH notes the Israeli military and political escalation, as well as the hard-line positions that reject the principles of withdrawal and acknowledgement of Arab rights. In addition, Israel has raised the ceiling of demands and impossible conditions to the maximum. This clearly contradicts the UN and Security Council resolutions, blatantly circumvents the Madrid terms of reference, and wastes U.S. efforts.

The paper says: It has become clear to the whole world that Syria is very eager to adhere to the peace process and make it achieve a just and comprehensive peace that is based on the implementation of the resolutions of international legitimacy and adherence to the Madrid terms of reference and the spirit of the U.S. land-for-peace initiative. In return, Israeli efforts have been based on maneuvering, procrastination, and temporization. Israel has spared no means to obstruct the peace process and avoid the requirements of a settlement in order to create a spirit of despair that allows it to impose a fait accompli, legitimize occupation, and defeat just Arab demands for restoring their usurped land and rights. This will also enable Israel to have a free hand and spread its absolute authority over the region.

AL-THAWRAH concludes: The Tel Aviv rulers, who are doing their best to destroy the peace process and are eager to impose security concepts and advance partial solutions, know that Syria does not accept bargains or compromises. Syria will not accept anything less than the return of all of the Golan and southern Lebanon. It will not tolerate a threat to its security and that of the nation under whatever circumstances and pretexts.

Country To Supply Lebanon With Electricity

JN1304164995 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1515 GMT 13 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] At 1200 today, Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi received Lebanese Minister of Water and Electricity Ilyas Hubayqah. The meeting was attended by Minister of Electricity Munib Sa'im-al-Dahr and Nasri al-Khuri, secretary general of the Higher Syrian-Lebanese Council.

The talks addressed the fraternal ties of cooperation and coordination between the two countries, particularly in the field of electricity.

The Syrian side, led by Electricity Minister Munib Sa'im-al-Dahr, and the Lebanese side, led by Water and Electricity Minister Ilyas Hubayqah, held a round of talks in Damascus today. They discussed the issue of supplying fraternal Lebanon with electricity from the Syrian grid. The two sides agreed to continue the relevant studies on this issue. They also agreed that Lebanon will be supplied with approximately 50 megawatts of electrical power not later than 1 June 1995. The two sides stressed that the possibility of maintaining and increasing this electrical supply to Lebanon will be examined later in light of the available technical resources.

The two sides also endorsed the contract to supply the Lebanese border village of Tufayl with electrical power from the Syrian grid.

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Afghanistan

'Intensive' Russian Bombing Reported in Takhar Area

100 People Said 'Martyred'

LD1304170595 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 13 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] In the course of a most intensive bombardment by the Russian aggressive warplanes, 100 people were martyred this morning in Taloqan city, capital of Takhar Province.

An Armed Forces source reported to BAKHTAR that today at around 0630 hours 12 Russian jets, in violation of the sanctity of the country's airspace, have savagely and mercilessly bombarded the city of Taleqan. As a result of this savage bombardment 100 citizens of Taleqan were killed and another 200 were injured. The injured people were transferred to the hospitals. The medical condition of some of the injured people is reported to be grave.

As a result of this savage bombardment by the Russian warplanes, dozens of buildings and residential houses, and over 200 shops were destroyed in Taleqan city. Over 200 animals were also destroyed. Although the exact estimate of damages has not yet been reported, however, the damage is estimated at hundreds of millions of Afghanis in Taleqan city.

According to another report, the Russian warplanes also savagely bombarded yesterday evening the residential areas in Farkhar district, Takhar Province. As a result of this bombardment, a number of people in this district were either martyred or injured and a number of residential houses were damaged.

It should be mentioned that the aggressive Russians [words indistinct] have continuously been violating the airspace of our country and have bombarded large areas in Takhar and Badakhshan Provinces.

Ministery Calls For Immediate UN Session

LD1304184395 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 13 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] In a protest note regarding the repeated violations of the country's territory by Russian war planes, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic State of Afghanistan today called for an immediate session of the UN Security Council. The note says: In pointing out the repeated violations of Afghanistan's airspace, in particular the raids on Taloqan city, capital of Takhar Province, at 0630 today by 12 Russian jets, which caused 100 people to be martyred, some 200 injured, and 110 shops, a food market and several buildings destroyed, the note calls for an immediate session of the UN Security Council.

A formal request regarding the convening of the session has been handed over to the United Nations by the permanent representative of the Islamic State of Afghanistan in the United Nations. The permanent representative of Afghanistan in the United Nations has been assigned to hold immediate talks with the ambassadors, permanent representatives, permanent members, and other members of the Security Council, and to ask the permanent members of the Security Council to take urgent action in this respect and to prevent further intensification of the situation.

The Afghanistan's permanent representative has also been assigned to hand over a letter by the minister of state for foreign affairs to the UN secretary general. The Ambassador of the Islamic State of Afghanistan in New York has been assigned to meet with the UN secretary general and to explain the policy of the Islamic State of Afghanistan vis-a-vis the intensification of the situation along the border between Afghanistan and Tajikistan, and to ask the Russian Federation to refrain from repeating such raids and violating the airspace of Afghanistan. The Republic of Tajikistan should also perceive the sound stance of the Islamic State of Afghanistan and end its civil war by entering into productive and acceptable talks.

No Comment by Russian Ministry

LD1404092395 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0850 GMT 14 Apr 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] New Delhi April 14 TASS—Radio Kabul broadcast on Thursday [13 April] an official report that Russian military aircraft dealt a bombing strike on the city of Taloqan, the centre of the north Afghan province of Takhar, 50 kilometres away from the Afghan-Tajik border. One hundred people were killed and more than 200 wounded in the raid.

Radio Kabul reported that in connection with the Russian air strike, Afghanistan's Foreign Ministry demanded that the United Nations Security Council be urgently convened "to take measures to stop air raids on the Afghan territory".

On Friday morning the Russian Foreign Ministry refused to comment on these reports. A representative of the press centre of the Russian air forces said he has no information about an airstrike on the Afghan city of Taloqan.

India

Bomb Hoax Diverts Plane to Karachi

BK1304162095 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 13 Apr 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] An Air India plane carrying Lok Sabha speaker, Mr. Shivraj Patil, and a high-level

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parliamentary delegation from Delhi to Dubayy was today diverted to Karachi following a bomb scare which turned out to be a hoax.

The Airbus 310 flight took off from Indira Gandhi International Airport at about noon and landed in Karachi five minutes past two in the afternoon. The airport sources said that the plane left Karachi for Dubayy at 1900. The high-level delegation included the minister of state for sports, Mr. Mukul Wasnik; the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] leader, Mr. Jaswant Singh; and a Congress-I MP, Mr. Ajot Jogi.

Reaction to, Commentary on Bhutto's U.S. Visit

Minister Views Pressler Law Changes

BK1404021295 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1630 GMT 13 Apr 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] India has conveyed to the United States that any modification in the Pressler Amendment, leading to Pakistan getting military aid from the United States will fuel arms race on the subcontinent. In a television interview, the external affairs minister, Mr. Pranab Mukherjee, opposed any sale of F-16 fighter planes to Pakistan.

[Begin Mukherjee recording] We have made it quite clear to U.S. that giving F-16 to Pakistan would enhance our threat percept and it may lead to a situation where we may to spend more money to ensure our national security, which we do not want. We have no intention of entering into unhealthy arms race. [end recording]

'Success' of Pressler Discussions Seen

BK1404080895 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 14 Apr 95 p 8

[Editorial: "Master's friend"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Ms Benazir Bhutto's success in persuading the Clinton administration to seek a modification of the Pressler amendment is bound to cause widespread concern in India. This is all the more so because of the recent revelation about Pakistan acquiring a new reactor which can process plutonium. It was believed that this embarrassing disclosure while the Pakistan Prime Minister was trying to convince her hosts about her country's peaceful intentions would undermine her case. But the Clinton administration appears to have convinced itself about Pakistan being a moderate Islamic country. As such, the reference in the joint statement to Kashmir as "primary source" of tension ignored the primary cause for it—Pakistan-sponsored terrorism. It is possible that the US will insist on placing Pakistan's nuclear installations, especially the new reactor, under international supervision before relaxing the Pressler amendment, but this can hardly be reassuring to India given the clandestine manner in which Pakistan has acquired its nuclear potential. Besides, the examples of Iraq and North Korea have shown that international safeguards are not always enough.

There is little doubt that any resumption of "military and economic cooperation" between the US Pakistan will put the clock back to the Cold War days when Pakistan skillfully used its position as a frontline participant in Washington's anti-Communist strategy to build up its arsenal and engage in three wars with India. Indeed, while expressing her eagerness to receive American F-16 planes "built by American workers", Mr Bhutto needlessly recalled the Cold War period when India was "aligned with the Soviet Union" and supported the "Communist regime in Kabul". Since the thrust of her US visit was to tell Washington not to dilute American interest in Pakistan and prop up her own position at home, she seemed ready to welcome US intervention in South Asia in almost any form, whether as a mediator in Kashmir or as a participant in the earlier 5+2+2 proposal envisaging negotiations involving the five permanent Security Council members along with India, Pakistan, Japan and Germany. She also launched a diatribe against India with an intensity born probably of an uncertainty as to how far she will be able to restore Pakistan's earlier status of a client-state, Ms Bhutto is ready to pay any price so long as it helps her win American support for her survival in power.

Outcome of Visit Viewed

BK1404062895 Delhi JANSATTA in Hindi 13 Apr 95 p 6

[Editorial: "Consideration Shown to Pakistan"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The United States seems to be indulging in its favorite game again. The U.S. President's speech after sharing a meal with Benazir Bhutto not only reflects the customary hospitality of the host, but indicates to both Pakistan and India that the U.S. Administration has no objection if the two countries maintain a hostile attitude toward each other and leave their disputes unresolved. Some hints were also given to U.S. industrialists. The weapons manufacturers were assured that they will not be allowed to suffer the pains of recession despite the end of the Cold War and the consequent emphasis on arms control. At the same time, the consumer industry and the high technology sector were assured that their interests in the $900 million Indian market will be safeguarded.

Because of the impediment created by the Pressler Amendment, the United States failed to deliver a consignment of F-16 bombers to Pakistan despite receiving payment of around $1.5 billion. Mr. Clinton confessed to journalists: "I am not happy at being unable to either give the bombers to Pakistan or return the money." Whether the U.S. President likes it or not the right to repeal or amend the Pressler law rests with the Congress, not him. Mr. Clinton is likely to ask Congress to make the law more flexible, but he is not going to push for its total repeal. He realizes that such an action would render

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hollow the U.S. claim that it will not help countries trying to produce nuclear weapons. Moreover, such a stand would likely create suspicion about U.S. intentions in the minds of those countries that are being tempted by a variety of U.S. promises into signing the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. The U.S. President is therefore likely to seek only a one-time waiver to the law.

Despite Pakistan's promise to cooperate in resolving the Kashmir crisis under U.S. mediation, the United States is not prepared to heed this request and play the role of mediator, as it did in the Middle East. Mr. Clinton said the United States could only help both countries find a solution to the problem if they agree to it. The United States is well aware that its mediation is resolving the Arab-Israeli dispute only succeeded because both parties agreed to it. Significant in this context is that the United States had a special hold on Israel, but has no such influence over India. This is the reason the United States must indirectly accept the Indian viewpoint that the Kashmir dispute is essentially a bilateral issue that requires no third party intervention. The United States realizes that if it wants to benefit from the Indian market it must hold its anti-India feelings in check, for if the Indian people sense any U.S. intention to damage their national interests there will not be a favorable atmosphere for U.S. trade in India. This is the main reason why there has been no qualitative change in U.S. policy despite Bill Clinton's pro-Pakistani utterances and the massive publicity given by the American press to Benazir's U.S. visit.

Nevertheless, the United States does not want to give the impression that Benazir is returning home empty handed after her 10-day visit. She will be returning home with the bright prospect of $12 billion in investments and assurances of the desired amendment in the Pressler law. This, incidentally, is essential for her because the sheen of her popularity is quickly fading in her own country.

Pressler Amendment, Prithvi Production Linked

BK1404024295 Delhi THE ASIAN AGE in English 8 Apr 95 p 1

[By Pravin Sawhney]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] New Delhi, 7 April: Prithvi [Earth] has been inducted into the Indian Army. In military terms, Prithvi has attained operational status. As Prithvis are mobile, they will never be deployed physically in peacetime. Prithvis will be kept in their peacetime locations with sufficient reloads of warheads. Senior Army officers say the government is, however, dragging its feet on regular streamlined production of the missile by the nodal manufacturing agency, Bharat Dynamics, in Hyderabad. The Americans, who are aware of the status of Prithvi, have put pressure on Delhi to go slow on the production of indigenous Prithvis.

India has politely told the United States that if it repeals or does a one-time waiver of the Pressler Amendment, Delhi will be forced to review the production of Prithvi missiles. Sources say this message was given by the government to the American undersecretary for political affairs in the state department, Mr. Peter Tarnoff, during his recent visit to Delhi. The argument is that American military aid to Pakistan will disturb the conventional arms balance between India and Pakistan. As India does not have the finance for import of weapons, it will be forced to increase production of indigenous Prithvi missiles to improve its defence capabilities.

The Prithvi missile unit has been raised with a full complement of officers, soldiers, and support staff in Hyderabad. Systems and subsystems required for firing the missiles have been put into place. A provisional field manual which provides details of operational employment of Prithvis has been given by the School of Artillery to the users.

The government has already said that user trials of Prithvi are complete. These were done in September 1994 from Chandipur-at-Sea in Orissa, when three Prithvis were fired from the Interim Test Range by the artillery. The earlier plan, to conduct user-trials in Pokharan (Rajasthan), was abandoned because of its proximity to the border with Pakistan.

However, a conventional Prithvi warhead was dropped as a free-bomb from an Indian Air Force aircraft in Pokharan to test its fuse and detonation.

Army officers who saw the crater made by the nearly 750 kg TNT [Trinitrotoluene] explosive (the warhead is 1,000 kg, of which about 250 kg is the weight of guidance and safety systems) say it was impressive. The artillery is satisfied with the accuracy achieved by Prithvi, which has been successfully fired up to a range 140 km.

Meant for the western sector, Prithvis will use conventional warheads. Sources say Prithvi will be an operational weapon and will not be used against civilian or economic targets. For this reason, India had offered proposals to guarantee non-use against civilian and economic infrastructure as part of the six non-papers given to Pakistan in January 1994.

Islamabad has not responded to the Indian offer because it wants to make a 'worst case Prithvi targeting scenario' to put pressure on Washington to lean on Delhi to agree to a zero-missile status in the subcontinent.

Iran

Rafsanjani Attacks 'Two-Faced' U.S. Policy

LD1304192795 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 13 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani, president of the Islamic Republic of Iran, responded today to the recent threats and reactive moves by the United States concerning the imposition of economic sanctions and the exertion of further pressure on the Islamic

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Republic of Iran. He issued a statement describing such adventurism as having no effect on the reconstruction plans of the Islamic Republic of Iran and as a cover for the illegitimate military presence of the United States in the region. The text of the statement of Iran's president is as follows:

In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate.

What is being witnessed in the arena of reactive and illogical U.S. diplomacy regarding the Islamic Republic of Iran results from the fundamental mistake made by U.S. statesmen at the time of the victory of the Islamic revolution of Iran and its continuation in the ensuing years until today. The reality is that at that time the United States failed to understand the nature and dimensions of the Islamic Revolution and, by adopting improper stances, paved the way for the United States' confrontation with a great and divine revolution and even the Islamic ummah [community of believers]; a revolution which—despite the power of Iran's rulers at that time and the extensive support given to them by the [world] arrogance and Zionists—managed to achieve victory under the auspices of the widespread presence and the unprecedented unity of the people of Iran and attract the support of millions of world Muslims and the deprived. With that tremendous asset, [the Islamic Republic] has well put behind it the problems and plots of the period following the revolution as well as the eight-year period of its lone defense against the widescale military onslaught by the Iraqi regime—which was unstintingly supported by Western and Eastern powers, oil-rich states, and the mass propaganda of imperialist media—and has proved its innocence and righteousness to international forums which had no record of justice and fairness in their approach to the revolution. Right now it is successfully going through a period of reconstruction and development.

It was expected that the U.S. Administration at that time, which carried the label of Democrat, would at least demonstrate its understanding of the revolution by not embarking on obstructionism and by expressing regret over past behavior. Regrettably the reckless interventions and obstructions by the United States—which recalled the same patronizing spirit of the colonial past—continued unabated and instead of paying attention to the mistakes and reforming the wrong course, U.S. statesmen embarked on irrational moves such as freezing and confiscating Iran's assets, breaking relations, the unsuccessful military expedition to Tabas, resorting to coup d'etat methods, using terrorist and riot elements, and eventually urging the Iraqi regime to aggress against Iran and embarking on the propagation of a huge wave of false and baseless propaganda against the Islamic revolution in order to divert public opinion. They even, impudently, spoke about the drying out of the roots of the great Iranian nation with its thousands of years of history. Apparently, repeated failures in carrying out that mistaken policy, rather than encouraging the U.S. statesmen to revise their ways, increased their wrath and animosity. Consequently they are widening the circle of this illegal and unsuccessful aggression by inept moves and new accusations.

The accusation of production and amassing of chemical weapons, efforts toward the production of nuclear arms, as well as development of conventional weapons—apparently mainly aimed at frightening the Islamic Republic of Iran's neighbors, rationalizing the illegitimate military presence in the region, and imposing the sale of exorbitant and unnecessary weaponry on the regional states—is among those moves. It is so futile and unrealistic to level the accusation of chemical weapons production against a country which demonstrated self-restraint and did not forget human principles during its eight years of innocent defense in the face of the extensive use of such weapons as well as the Iraqi regime's numerous violations—such as the destruction of civilian centers and attacks on civilian airliners—to level the accusation of making efforts to acquire nuclear weapons against a country which has carried out all its obligations regarding the nonproliferation of nuclear arms, as repeatedly confirmed by officials of the International Atomic Energy Agency—to level the accusation of terrorism or support of terrorism at a revolution which itself more than others has been a victim of terrorists who are now freely active in the United States—to level the accusation of despotism and violation of human rights against a revolution which from its inception was created through the will of the people and contrary to the tradition of contemporary revolutions has set elections, referendums, and the people's views as the foundation of the administration of the country's affairs from the first months of its victory, and throughout its life has enjoyed and does still enjoy the most widespread popular support and presence in all arenas, that even the accusers cannot be convinced by such accusation.

That is particularly so since the accusations are raised by a government which itself supports Israel's state terrorism, its policy of aggression and nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons production, and supports those despotic governments which have not experienced a parliament or elections even for one day. It is not clear what the U.S. statesmen think about the ideas and understanding of the people of the world when they seek to present their impudent efforts to sell arms to others as a service to peace, democracy, and human rights; or when they portray the Islamic Republic of Iran as a threat and nuisance to the region in order to safeguard their illegitimate and colonial interests in the region while Iran has pursued no other policy throughout its existence but good-neighborliness and tolerance toward its neighbors.

It may not be far from reality to say, in analyzing the situation, that the U.S. rulers, as a result of their own deceptive propaganda—which unfortunately has diverted a considerable portion of the public opinion in that country from the realities of the region and Iran—have sunk in a self-made quagmire and are making their

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escape from it even harder by repeating their mistakes. It may even be that the rival party [Republicans], in order to build its bridge of victory—has set a dangerous trap for the current U.S. statesmen through the Congress, their new bastion.

Whatever the reason for the current moves, the U.S. statesmen should once again ponder their misunderstandings, wrong performances, and historic blunders. No doubt, the U.S. banning of its trade ties with Iran cannot have a considerable effect on the economy of a large country like Iran which has huge resources and an extensive network of foreign relations.

Some [of Iran's] commercial deals might have deceived them to think that such deals have been made out of desperation. But a little thought will make it clear that such cooperation is not out of desperation and can have other reasons. Another issue which is clear is the the two-faced policy of the United States. On the one hand, it wishes to establish economic relations with Iran while, on the other, it does not prescribe such relations for others. Through its half-baked policies, the United States exerts pressure on its competitors to sever economic ties with Iran and give up their legitimate interests. An act which is contrary to all norms. It seems that the United States does not want to mix the sweet taste of its arms markets and its profitable projects in other oil-rich countries of the region with the bitter experience of losing the Iranian market. It is this very same two-faced policy that will make the world lose its long-term trust in America.

U.S. statesmen will be committing another great mistake to think that they can use pressure on Iran as a means of implementing their aims in imposing an unjust peace on the Palestinian people. It would be better [for them] to see the defeat of the affair from the unjust tenor of the plan, a plan which has failed to foresee any fundamental solution to the existing problems. The plan, for instance, has failed to think of a rescue for the millions of Palestinian refugees, or a positive reaction to national, Islamic, and human feelings which have been savagely suppressed for half a century, or an answer to the unforgettable desire to return to homeland, or the realization of definite and denied rights, or a conclusion to many decades of holy war, or the offering of hundreds of thousands of sacrifices, or other similar fundamental issues. If a statement of opposition by Islamic Iran is in itself so effective that it can, without an actual move, paralyze such a plan—which has the support of the great and small powers—would it not be better to revise behavior toward such a source of influence and power. It is necessary for the custodians of the recent U.S. actions to consider that new adventurism—much like the irrational policy of the past 16 years—will not bring any desired results for the United States. Because considering U.S. economic problems and the international markets, that country's economic interests will be the one to suffer the heaviest loss. With the full understanding that I have of the strengths of Islam and Iran, and as the Iranian president, I declare that contemporary Iran—with its means, its human force, its vigilance, its presence of a sacrificing people on the scene, its strength of order and its geopolitical position—is not an arena for new U.S. adventurism. It is prepared to end the present economic relations whenever it thinks fit and to continue its reconstruction program with full strength. Such illegal and irrational agitation can only lead to instability in the region and the derangement of healthy political and economic international relations.

[Signed] Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani, president of the Islamic Republic of Iran

Rafsanjani Urges Further ECO-ASEAN Cooperation

LD1304170695 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1430 GMT 13 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] President Hashemi-Rafsanjani today received Ajit Singh, the secretary general of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, ASEAN.

President Hashemi-Rafsanjani announced: The Islamic Republic of Iran is fully prepared to follow up our country's proposed plan for cooperation between the two economic organizations of ECO [Economic Cooperation Organization] and ASEAN.

He added: The two organizations can determine specific methods for such cooperation through a better understanding of existing resources in the two organizations' member countries.

The ASEAN secretary general presented a report on his talks with officials of the Islamic Republic of Iran and described our country as a suitable trade route for ASEAN countries to access regional markets and the Central Asian countries.

Rafsanjani Meets New Zealand, Laos, Bangladesh Envoys

LD1304205795 Tehran IRNA in English 1817 GMT 13 Apr 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, April 13, IRNA—New Zealand's ambassador to Tehran, John Daniel Richards, here on Thursday [13 April] expressed hope that Tehran-Wellington relations would expand. In a meeting with President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani, he said that Iran, the cradle of civilization is an important state with considerable cultural background. He said that the growing trend of cooperation, signing trade agreements, opening trade fairs, promotion of exports to new zealand indicate the deep relations between the two countries. Richards called for activation of Iran-New Zealand joint economic commission. President Rafsanjani welcomed expansion of ties between Tehran and Wellington and lauded New Zealand as a state which honours its commitments with perfect discipline.

Meanwhile, in a separate meeting with President Rafsanjani, Laotian accredited ambassador to Tehran,

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Ammon Singhavong expressed greeting of president of Laos, his nation and government to President Rafsanjani. He briefed the president on the process of the economic reform in Laos. He said that the government and people of Laos regard the Islamic Republic of Iran as an important friendly state and called for expansion of ties between Tehran and Vientiane.

President Rafsanjani expressed readiness of the Islamic Republic of Iran to share its technical and economic experience with Laos and called for expansion of economic relations between the two countries.

In another meeting with President Rafsanjani, Bangladeshi ambassador to Tehran, Ahmed Tariq Karim briefed the president on the latest developments in his country. He said that his country attached importance to the strategic role of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the region. He voiced his nation's willingness to boost economic relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran and that Bangladeshi people honour the historical and religious bonds between the two nations. President Rafsanjani welcomed expansion of ties between Tehran and Dacca and said that Iran is ready to share its experience with the Muslim state of Bangladesh.

Minister Explains Cancellation of Azeri Oil Deal

LD1304225095 Tehran IRIB Television Second Program Network in Persian 1848 GMT 13 Apr 95

[Interview with Mahmud Va'ezi, deputy foreign minister for European and American Affairs, by unidentified correspondent in the studio; from the "Political Roundtable" program—live or recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Correspondent] What was the basis for canceling the oil agreement between Iran and the Azerbaijan Republic?

[Va'ezi] When a number of companies came together to look for oil in the Caspian Sea, we began negotiations about cooperation between the five littoral states of the Caspian Sea. On the basis of the talks that were held between Iranian and Azerbaijani oil officials, and with due consideration for Iranian experience in the oil industry, it was decided that we would have a share in the consortium for oil cooperation in the Caspian Sea. We were to start our activity and we were to help in the search for oil in the oil-rich Caspian Sea. Unfortunately, the area has not been recognized in the past. But it will have a distinguished status in the future.

We thought that while oil negotiations were under way with the consortium, the political and legal officials from the five littoral states will start negotiations for the legal status of the Caspian Sea. Naturally, until the legal status of the Caspian Sea is clear, it is not possible to cooperate for the discovery of oil, nor start actual operations on a level as large as that of the consortium. In the past few months we have seen U.S. Government opposition to the presence of the Iranian oil company in the consortium. According to our information, in the last meeting of the consortium, it was only the U.S company that opposed the presence of Iran. But the Iranian presence is to the advantage of the consortium, because the consortium needs our oil resources in order to advance its own work. When oil is ready in the reserves, there are no methods of exporting it except through Iran. It was on this basis that the consortium announced that they were not unanimous about our membership.

We are very sad that the Azerbaijani Government has made a decision about its partnership with Iran on the basis of the view of foreign companies. The Azerbaijani Government had definitely announced that Iran had a five percent share. The agreement that was signed with us was taken to their parliament and passed by the Azerbaijani parliament. It was made law. It was approved. It is totally unacceptable for us that a neighboring country should give up its decision-making, regarding such important affairs, to foreigners.

Now there is the legal status of the Caspian Sea. It is our definite decision that the legal status of the Caspian Sea must be defined. It is up to the five littoral states of the Caspian Sea to gather, negotiate, and finalize the situation. Obviously, if every country decides to chose it's own legal status, there can never be common understanding between the five countries. We are sure that until the legal status is defined, no agreement by the consortium or other, can be of credit. Naturally, no investor is going to invest in the Caspian Sea where there are difficulties. The Russian Government has clearly announced that it opposes the start of the explorations before the legal status of the Caspian Sea is defined. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] Mr. Va'ezi, regarding the cancelation of the agreement with Iran, we recently witnessed that in Baku a series of events took place that further highlighted the need for maintaining good-neighborliness in the region. What effect can the cancelation of the agreement have in this regard?

[Va'ezi] In the past three and half years we have given a large amount of aid to the people and Government of Azerbaijan to enable them under circumstances where they are fighting with Armenia; a war that has engaged all the financial and human resources of the two countries.... [pauses] We assisted both the Government and the people of Azerbaijan; from either the political or economic point of view. We put a lot of resources at the disposal of the Azeri Government in order for it to resolve its problems. Naturally, when we see that the Azeri Government cannot defend the pledges it has made to the Islamic Republic of Iran, definitely those relations cannot continue with the same strength in the future.

Of coursem, the people of Azerbaijan are a people with many commonalities with us. They are Shiites; from the point of view of language.... [pauses] They have many commonalities. We can say that they are one of the closest nations to us. We definitely wish all of Azerbaijan's problems to be resolved—its people to be able to

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achieve their true independence, have their economic problems resolved, and the Karabakh issue to be resolved through peaceful means. In the past we made much effort for the war not to be prolonged. Sometimes we were successful. Outside factors had an adverse effect so that we could not achieve all our objectives to resolve the problems of Karabakh. In any case, we made much effort in the past. It is natural that if the government of Azerbaijan cannot undertake its commitments to Iran—such as the issue of the oil consortium that you referred to, or other issues that exist between them and us—if it cannot undertake those [commitments] it is natural that it cannot have successful and strengthened relations in the future.

I hope that the Government of Azerbaijan will be able to resolve its domestic problems and we are ready to assist them in overcoming the existing issues there that have been instrumental in foreign countries making an impression on them, and for them to think that by the pledges of some foreign countries they can resolve their problems. They should realize that this is not the proper path. [passage omitted]

Ministry Denies UK Report of Falling Oil Output

LD1304153195 Tehran IRNA in English 1432 GMT 13 Apr 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, April 13, IRNA—The Oil Ministry in a statement issued on Thursday [13 April] categorically denied any reduction in production and export of Iranian crude oil. Certain foreign news agencies recently quoted the British magazine 'MIDDLE EAST ECONOMIC SURVEY' as claiming that Iran's oil production and export had sharply fallen. The statement, a copy of which was made available to IRNA, underlined that Iran's oil production and export continued at its normal level in March 1995.

Council Approves Funds for NIOC Investment Projects

LD1304212195 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 13 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] In its latest session, the Economic Council approved the allocation of 243 billion rials for investment in projects carried out by the National Iranian Oil Company [NIOC]. The sum will come from domestic sources of income.

The projects include reconstruction and renovation of oil fields, manufacture of peripheral installations for exploration and production of natural gas, reconstruction and expansion of the Salman oilfield, manufacture of peripheral installations for the Bandar-e 'Abbas refinery, and completion and improvement of the Ahvaz pipe-manufacturing plants.

Petroleum Minister Meets OPEC Secretary General

NC1404080495 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0330 GMT 14 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] OPEC Secretary General Loghman met with Petroleum Minister Gholam Reza Aqazadeh last night in Tehran. The Central News Unit reports that during the meeting, the OPEC secretary general thanked the Islamic Republic of Iran for its stand in the recent elections for the post of secretary general and in solving OPEC's difficulties, and said: OPEC always needs the Islamic Republic's support for solutions to its problems.

The OPEC secretary general also attended an exclusive interview with the Central News Unit's correspondent. Commenting on the objectives of his visit to Tehran, he said: Problems concerning the membership of small oil-producing countries, such as Gabon, in OPEC are among the issues that will be discussed with the Iranian petroleum minister.

Daily Views CONOCO Deal, U.S. Commercial Relations

NC1404073795 Tehran RESALAT in Persian 8 Apr 95 p 16

[Political commentary: "Commercial Relations With Satan?!"]

[FBIS Translated Text] After a lapse of nearly a month since the signing of an oil agreement between the National Iranian Oil Company with the American—but outwardly Dutch—company CONOCO and its subsequent nullification, this important issue is still swathed in a haze of ambiguity.

Since tomorrow, 9 April, coincides with the anniversary of the total severance of relations with the United States, let us look at the record of CONOCO and in general at commercial relations between Iran and the United States.

Why should we have any agreements or trade relations with the United States? This is a government which in the sphere of international policies and more tangibly, in the area of regional policies, mobilized its efforts to topple and allegedly contain Iran, and continues to do so. Why should it have the benefit of trading with us?

Why should the American side, which has constantly been knocking on all doors to enter into trade agreements with Iran, and on a higher level for diplomatic relations with Iran, suddenly decide to cancel the agreement? The most amazing aspect of this issue is that the above company is a branch of a U.S. conglomerate in the Netherlands. The head office is known as Du Pont and the mother company is located in Texas [as published]. After revoking the agreement of a billion dollars, most

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Jewish political circles are proudly boasting the effective role of Jewish lobbies and shareholders in nullifying the U.S. side.

The CONOCO company is located in The Netherlands and is one of the subsidiaries of the Du Pont De Nemours Co., administered by pro-Jewish Americans who are very influential in Congress. More than 25 percent of the shares of the mother company are in the hands of the Bronfman family and Edgar Bronfman is the head of the World Jewish Congress. He is being touted as one who played a vital role in the unilateral abrogation of the agreement between Iran and the CONOCO branch.

In any case, the nullification of the deal with CONOCO should be chalked up to experience so that we can steer clear of U.S. companies, especially since it is possible most of them will be inherently Zionist and will be plotting against Iran's national interests.

U.S. Efforts To 'Upset' Relations With Russia Viewed

NC1404101595 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 5 Apr 95 p 12

[Unattributed commentary: "Repeating a Futile Effort"]

[FBIS Translated Text] During the past few days, the United States and the Zionist regime have resorted to extensive political-propaganda efforts to prevent Russia from continuing nuclear cooperation with the Islamic Republic of Iran. During the past week, U.S and Israeli mass media have been full of articles and comments on the need for Russia to sever its nuclear cooperation with Islamic Iran. These efforts culminated with the visit by U.S. Secretary of Defense William Perry to Moscow and his meeting with the Russian prime minister and minister of energy, and with the president of the Russian Federation in a bid to convince them to halt their nuclear cooperation with the Islamic Republic of Iran. Nevertheless, the explicit response by the Russian officials to all these futile efforts was negative. The Russian officials clarified that the Russian nuclear reactors that are to be delivered to Tehran for the completion of the Bushehr nuclear power plant will be used solely for peaceful purposes and that this transaction is not contrary to any of the existing international laws and regulations.

Once again the United States experienced the bitter taste of political defeat in their fight against Islamic Iran on the international political scene. At a time when—following its repeated inspection of the Islamic Republic's nuclear activities—the International Atomic Energy Organization has confirmed the peaceful nature of these activities, and at a time when these activities are not hidden from the eyes of any world forum, it is only on the basis of their spite against the Islamic Revolution that the United States has been resorting to any and all possible means to halt these activities. These efforts have proven futile until now because, in addition to the fact that the Islamic Republic's activities are legal and acceptable within the framework of international regulations, the truth is that we are being pressured by a government which pays the least attention to international regulations itself. This is a fact which is obvious to all governments.

The United States—as the largest owner of nuclear weapons and as the largest government ignoring the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty—is unfortunately also the largest defender of this pact and has sparked many crises because it is politically arbitrary. The United States—whose nuclear arsenals have always been covertly expanded without any attention to international laws during the past two decades and even under post-Cold War circumstances—have perpetrated the crises in the Korean peninsula, in relations between Pakistan and India, and in relations between some Arab regimes and Israel; and recently they have often tried, unsuccessfully, to upset cooperation between Iran and Russia. But these efforts have only helped to deepen the feeling of rage and aversion that the Iranian nation has toward the White House.

U.S. Operation in Iraq Described as 'Game'

NC1404104295 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 5 Apr 95 p 11

[Commentary by A. Salah: "America's New Game in Northern Iraq!"]

[FBIS Translated Text] In the first days of the new [Iranian] year [beginning 21 March], the Turkish regime staged an aggression in northern Iraq with a 35,000-strong army on the pretext of crushing rebel Kurds (PKK) [Kurdistan Workers Party] and preventing the country's dismemberment. Tansu Ciller described this as the largest military operation by the Turkish Army since the decline of the Ottoman Empire, adding that the incursion came after three months of planning and was carried out on the first day of the new year when the Kurds were preparing to celebrate! She also claimed that these operations have cost Turkey $1 billion.

Some Turkish commentators have described these remarks as "big words" uttered to fool the public in Turkey. In their comments they stated that in the case of Turkey's military attack on Cyprus and the attack on northern Iraq, the Turkish forces did not face a regularly trained army, and that in both cases there was no war, although both operations were portrayed to the Turkish people as successful and victorious by the Turkish army so that the people would understand and tolerate the economic problems the regime was facing.

The Turkish Government's intention was to make the people realize that Turkey's national unity and territorial integrity can be safeguarded only by the secular regime.

But in the midst of all this, what is being kept secret from the Turkish people is that on the basis of its commitments, a NATO member does not have the right to use NATO weapons for operations beyond its borders. On

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the same basis, on 1 Farvardin [21 March], it was reported outside Turkey that the Turkish regime had received the necessary NATO permission to enter northern Iraq. But inside Turkey, in a bid to build castles in the air, Turkey's former Chief of the Joint Staff General Dogan Gures stated: "We have not received anyone's permission, because we are an independent country!"

On the basis of the NATO military pact, operations beyond the borders of a member nation are not allowed unless the necessary permission is granted by the NATO general command. Thus, Necmettin Erbakan, leader of the pro-Islamic Welfare Party stated in an interview with HURRIYET last week: "These operations were planned in the Pentagon with the cooperation of 50 Israeli officers and experts and are actually a game by the United States, imposed on Europe and on other NATO members, all of which have forcefully accepted it. With the United States and Europe involved in a rivalry over the Middle East issue, by putting Turkey into action, the United States wants to restrain its NATO allies."

This is the truth. The European countries are dissatisfied with Turkey's military operations in northern Iraq; although they have accepted these operations on the basis of NATO decisions, they have warned Turkey that it should withdraw from northern Iraq as soon as possible. But the same sensitivity is not visible in the United States, since all the operations have been planned by them.

In a VOA interview last week, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Richard Holbrooke said: "It is vital for the United States to safeguard Turkey's territorial integrity, and when I speak of U.S. interests, clearly the United States means Europe! During the Cold War, Germany played the role of the frontline country against Communism. This role is played by Turkey today."

This U.S. official believes that after the Cold War, conflicts have shifted from the "Moscow-Washington" pivot to the "West-Middle East" pivot and that the new enemy is nothing but "Islam!" This is why a secular regime has been chosen as a frontline country. An Islamic country in the region has been granted permission to enter any area to play the role of the gendarme guarding the West's values and interests against Islam.

Former Turkish Foreign Minister Hikmet Cetin, who was recently appointed deputy prime minister, said of the incursion into northern Iraq: "We have no differences with Iraq. But there is a power vacuum in northern Iraq, and we do not know who to talk to about the problems Turkey is facing from this area!"

The leader of Turkey's pro-Kurdish opposition party too said in a magazine interview that the Turkish Army has been defeated in the operations, since, basically speaking, a country that mobilizes a 35,000-strong force to crush rebel forces actually admits the strength of the rebel forces.

The question is: If the Turkish regime has mobilized 35,000 men to crush the PKK in northern Iraq and, as Turkish officials say, has killed only 300 rebel guerrillas, then can it not be concluded that either there were no PKK forces in the area of the attack or the Turkish Army was unsuccessful in its operation? Political circles believe that only after Turkey gave the necessary information to the NATO headquarters in Brussels to receive NATO's permission did the European countries report on the attack on the PKK. It should not be forgotten that Belgium, the capital of which houses the NATO headquarters, is considered to be among the major supporters of the Kurds in Europe and the "Kurdish parliament in exile" will convene there next week.

It seems that in Turkey's military aggression against northern Iraq, only U.S. interests were considered; Europe's interests were not assured. Not without reason do many believe that this has been a U.S., not a Turkish, game in northern Iraq.

Military Official: U.S. 'Ballyhoo' Not Feared

LD1404102395 Tehran IRNA in English 1002 GMT 14 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Tehran, April 14, IRNA—A senior Iranian military official said here Friday [14 April] that Iran's use of nuclear energy was for peaceful purposes.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran does not fear Washington's ballyhoo and commotions," Brigadier General Naser Arasteh, deputy chief of staff of the Islamic Republic Army said in his address as a pre-sermon speaker at this week's Friday prayers.

"If the U.S. is so angry with us that it has launched a cold war against Iran and is intensifying it, it is because, as the late imam said, the U.S. has been slapped in the face by Iran and its illegitimate interests have been endangered," he said.

He said that Iran not only is not afraid of the U.S. and other enemies of Islam that are showing their teeth to it but also is closely watching their threats and ballyhoo.

He also reaffirmed the Army's allegiance to the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces Ayatollah 'Ali Khamene'i whom he described as a learned and fair leader.

Ayatollah Criticizes Increased Pressure by West

LD1404103495 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 14 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The political and religious rites of Friday prayers was staged all over the country today with the massive participation of the Hezbollah ummah [community of believers].

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The Muslim people of Tehran staged the unity-inspiring Friday prayers at Tehran University campus and the surrounding streets under the leadership of Ayatollah Emami-Kashami. The acting Friday prayer leader of Tehran referred to the illuminating statement by [President] Hashemi-Rafsanjani on the reactionary stands of the United States toward the Islamic Republic of Iran.

He said: The enemies of the Islamic revolution, in particular the United States, imagine that as a result of major conspiracies such as the imposed war and the economic sanctions, the Islamic Republic of Iran will fall apart and the people will feel disappointed with the Islamic revolution.

However, the ever-increasing splendor of the Islamic revolution, the consolidation of the system's stability, the successful implementation of huge reconstruction projects, and finally people's presence on the scenes—such as their participation in the 11 February rallies, the Qods [Jerusalem] Day demonstrations, and the splendid funeral ceremonies for Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Haj Seyyed Ahmad Khomeyni—have all served to contradict the enemies' baseless imaginations. It is for this reason that American statesmen have decided to intensify their pressure on the Islamic Republic of Iran.

He then praised the Iranian nation for their resistance to the economic and political conspiracies of the enemies. He added: As the president said in his statement, the U.S. Government still does not know anything about the Islamic revolution and the Muslim nation of Iran.

Ayatollah Emami-Kashani then described the role played by the rumormongers who, he said, were moving in the direction of the enemies of Islam. He called on people to remain even more vigilant in the face of this hypocritical trend.

Moreover, the Friday prayer leader commemorated Army Day [18 April], and paid tribute to the valuable role of the armed forces, including the army, in supporting the Islamic revolution, particularly during in the sacred defense. He said: Today, the army, together with the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps and under the command of His Eminence Ayatollah Khamane'i, the commander in chief, is still engaged in its duty of safeguarding the Islamic homeland and the achievements of the Islamic revolution.

He then referred to the forthcoming Arba'in [40th day after the death] of Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Haj Seyyed Ahmad Khomeyni, the beloved son of His eminence the imam—may his soul be sanctified—and paid tribute to his services to Islam, the Islamic revolution, and the late imam. He also underscored the importance of staging extensive and magnificent ceremonies to commemorate his Arba'in.

Paper Details 'Spectacular' Protests in Islamshahr

NC1404090695 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 8 Apr 95 p 4

[FBIS Translated Text] Eslamshahr—On Friday morning [7 April] a large number of disabled, combatant, and selfless basijis organized a spectacular march to condemn a movement by a group of opportunists and provocateurs in the city.

Our correspondent reports that the marchers carried pictures of His Eminence Imam Khomeyni, may his soul be sanctified, the esteemed leader of the revolution, and chanted slogans of Death to America, Death to the Hypocrites [pejorative term for the Mojahedin-e Khalq Organization], and Death to Israel. They also expressed aversion to all evil movements that are contrary to the objectives of the divine system of the Islamic Republic.

The marchers then signed a petition condemning the efforts by an opportunist group to upset public order in Eslamshahr and then joined the worshipers at the Friday prayers.

The Hezbollah people of the villages of Akbarabad and Soltanabad also organized a march to condemn opportunist efforts to upset public order.

Our correspondent reports that the marchers, who were chanting the slogans God's Hand is Protecting Us, Khamene'i is Our Leader, and Death to the Monafeqin, marched through several streets in Robat Karim and gathered in the grand mosque to listen to the Friday imam's sermon.

No Entry of Turkish Government 'Opponents' Recently

LD1304210395 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1930 GMT 13 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Not even a single opponent of the Turkish Government has entered Iran since Turkish military operations began in northern Iraq, and the Islamic Republic of Iran has the situation in northern Iraq under supervision.

This statement was made on Thursday by 'Ali Mohammad Besharati, acting deputy of the commander in chief of the Law Enforcement Forces and the minister of interior, who has travelled to West Azerbaijan Province and who attended the joint morning ceremonies of the military troops and the Law Enforcement Forces in the region.

He thanked the Law Enforcement Forces for their efforts to guard the security and tranquility of the country.

According to the Central News Bureau in Orumiyeh, the minister of interior later attended a ceremony in the vicinity of Orumiyeh, inaugurating the construction of the town of Seru on the border area.

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Rushdie Fatwa 'Irreversible;' EU Seeks Solution

NC1304140795 Paris AFP in English 1336 GMT 13 Apr 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, April 13 (AFP)—Iran reaffirmed Thursday [13 April] that the death sentence against Salman Rushdie was irreversible, as the European Union tried to wrest a pledge from Tehran that it would not harm the British author.

But the daily IRAN NEWS and the radical JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI added Tehran had no intention of sending commandos to carry out the fatwa, or religious decree, imposed on Rushdie in 1989.

Former Iranian leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeyni condemned Rushdie to death following publication of his book "The Satanic Verses" judged blasphemous to Islam. He has since been in hiding under police protection.

EU ministers on Monday agreed to offer Tehran increased trade links in exchange for a commitment not to initiate any action against the author anywhere in the world, French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe said in Luxembourg.

"The Islamic fatwa against Rushdie is by no means reversible and changeable," the English-language daily IRAN NEWS wrote.

But it noted Iran had repeatedly said it would not send out assassins against Rushdie as Iran "does not interfere in the domestic affairs of other countries" and had denounced terrorism "in any form and shape."

JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI said "the imam's fatwa cannot be changed or modified."

Ambassadors from the EU troika of France, Germany and Spain are expected to contact Iranian authorities for an undertaking not to act against Rushdie. Details have not been released but the EU hopes for a lifting of the fatwa.

"The EU's recent move can open up a new chapter in ties with Iran, for this is the first time that the EU has agreed to honour the principles cherished by Tehran," IRAN NEWS said.

JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI said the moves were "linked to efforts to end Rushdie's isolation."

Meanwhile the British paper THE DAILY TELEGRAPH said Tuesday that Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Mahmud Va'ezi had signed a statement in Denmark in February.

It pledged: "The Iranian government never has sent, is not sending and will not in the future send anyone to kill Salman Rushdie."

The report was denied by local Iranian newspapers on Thursday saying that Va'ezi had never signed any "official or unofficial document on the Rushdie issue."

The Daily Telegraph said the EU plans to press Iran to sign a tougher document declaring "it will not take any action, whatever it may be, aimed at the assassination of Mr. Rushdie."

Pakistan

Reaction to, Commentary on Bhutto's U.S. Visit

Opposition, Politicians Comment

BK1404095595 Islamabad THE NATION in English 14 Apr 95 p 5

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Lahore—Whereas the Opposition leaders have declared Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's current visit to the United States as an absolute failure some politicians allied with the ruling party have also cautiously endorsed their viewpoint, the most prominent among them being Kashmir Committee Chairman Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan.

Commenting on the joint Press conference of American President Bill Clinton and Pakistan Premier Benazir Bhutto in Washington on Tuesday [11 April], Nawabzada Nasrullah said nothing concrete came out of this. He said the outcome of this meeting was exactly what he was anticipating.

The Kashmir Committee Chief said there may be some who could expect any good from America for the Muslims of the world but to me it will be an exercise in futility to bank on the false promises made by the US administration.

He said now President Clinton declares Pressler Amendment as a major obstacle in the supply of F-16s to Pakistan but he should also be aware of the fact that he could restore aid to Pakistan simply by certifying its nuclear programme as satisfactory.

From the Opposition camp PML (N) [Pakistan Muslim League - Nawaz] Vice President Khurshid Mehmood Kasuri came up with a detailed reaction. He said it was now absolutely clear and more so after Benazir's meeting with Clinton that her government had really been trying to make a mountain out of a molehill regarding the results of her trip to the United States.

Kasuri said the US President remained firm on his stand that Pressler Amendment signified American resolve towards non-proliferation and except for a verbal sympathy towards Pakistan's petition he did not commit anything positive. To him Clinton all the fan fare about one-to-one meeting between the Pakistani Premier and the US President was based on grossly foolish assumptions. [sentence as published]

The PML (N) leader was surprised that Benazir Bhutto had failed to even get an insurance cover for potential US investors in Pakistan since under the Pressler

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Amendment it was not possible for the American companies doing business in Pakistan to have their risk insured by the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC).

He said Benazir Bhutto's failure to do so meant that 12 billion dollars worth of MoUs singed with the US companies for investment in Pakistan with such fanfare were worthless pieces of paper since no US investor would now be investing money in Pakistan under the prevalent circumstances.

Commenting on President Clinton's verbal sympathy towards Pakistan's plight and his statement that he would try to talk to the Congress on this issue, the PML (N) Vice President said it was merely an effort for saving the face of Pakistani Prime Minister. He said Clinton had failed even to get the Congress agree to the Health Bill, championed by none else but his own wife and it was, therefore, most unlikely that he would succeed in convincing the Congress to give F-16s or restore aid to Pakistan.

In closing, he said Pakistan would have been better off had the Prime Minister had devoted the last few months for resolving the Karachi crisis than preparing for her trip to the United States. [sentence as published] He was critical of Benazir Bhutto's controversial statements before her departure to the US seeking foreign help for fighting against 'fundamentalist forces'.

Other PML (N) leaders including Mehnaz Rafi, Arshad Khan Lodhi, Mian Muhammad Azhar and former Ambassador Mian Abdul Waheed have described Benazir's visit to the United States as a mere pleasure trip and nothing else. They were confident that Benazir could not fool the people of Pakistan by terming her meeting with President Clinton a bog [as published] success.

JUP [Jamiatul Ulama-i-Pakistan] leaders Engineer Salimullah Khan, Sahibzada Fazl Karim and Qari Abdul Hamid Qadri thought that the main purpose of the visit of Benazir Bhutto to the United States had been lost as she had not been able to get F-16s for which Pakistan had already paid the price. They said the promise of the Clinton Administration for trying to convince the Congress for the repeal of the Pressler Amendment was a mirage and a false promise, like the Sixth Fleet coming to Pakistan way back in 1971 at the time of war between India and Pakistan.

In view of this 'big failure' they felt justified in demanding of Prime Minister Bhutto to immediately resign.

Analysis of 'Consolation Prizes'

BK1304095595 Islamabad THE NATION in English 13 Apr 95 pp 1, 5

["News Analysis" by Khalid Hasan: "Pressler Amendment repeal unlikely, only 'consolation prizes'"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Washington—While the Clinton administration is unlikely to declare war on the Pressler Amendment in Congress—the only way it could be repealed—what Pakistan may perhaps get is such "consolation prizes" as the waiver of the $50,000 annual storage fee that Islamabad is made to pay on the undelivered F-16s, return of the defence equipment sent for repair and increased technical and training support to help the country deal with drugs and terrorism.

Even Senator Larry Pressler conceded Tuesday after Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's meeting with President Clinton and their joint news conference that "if the administration wanted to lead the charge, I think they could probably repeal the Amendment."

But that is not going to happen, as could be gathered from Clinton's remarks at the White House following the meeting with Benazir when he said that he would not be seeking outright repeal of the Amendment but see what could be done to help ease Pakistan's situation while preserving the aims of the Pressler law, namely nuclear non-proliferation.

Pressler said that he would oppose "half measures" like waiving F-16 storage charges or new training assistance to Pakistan. "I think anything like that is going to be misleading the Pakistanis and just make them madder in the end. I support keeping it the way it is and waiting for the Pakistanis to make a move."

According to the New York Times [preceding three words published in italics] Wednesday, "prospects on Capitol Hill for any changes are mixed. The United States has since dispensed the money for the planes to the contractors that built them, and a new appropriation of such magnitude is highly unlikely in a climate in which calls for cutbacks in foreign aid are the order of the day."

The search for a third party buyer is equally doomed as not only is the technology old but there are no buyers in the market unless Pakistan agreed to have the planes sold at Lahore's "Bilal Ganj [junkyard for automobiles] prices." Perhaps it may be wiser to do that or simply accept Air Marshal Asgher Khan's advice and "gift" the undelivered but paid for aircraft to the United States with the compliments of the people of Pakistan and start afresh, tapping supply sources that would not dry up with a change in the direction of the wind. The Washington Post [preceding three words published in italics] wrote Wednesday that Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto had scored a "coup" here "without yielding an inch on her country's nuclear weapons programme" while extracting a promise from the US President he would ask Congress to "relax the disputed piece of legislation.

Said the Post in a news report splashed across the front-page with a picture of the two leaders, "Clinton was presented with a difficult choice by Bhutto's argument that Pakistani-Indian tension over the disputed

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territory of Kashmir and India's own known nuclear capability make it impossible for Pakistan to offer movement on the nuclear issue."

The newspaper quoted "administration officials," saying that the President would seek authority to resume other kinds of cooperation, including US training for Pakistani counter-terrorist forces and air traffic controllers, and US government risk insurance for corporate investors, to be followed by "consultations" on the F-16 issue.

The paper said, "Judging from the public comments of Clinton and other administration officials. Bhutto scored a diplomatic coup by keeping the focus of the talks on Pakistan's security problems, and on its role as a moderate Islamic state that cooperates with the United States on regional issues."

On Kashmir, while the United States has reiterated its known position that it still considers the entire state a "disputed territory". Clinton's offer of "mediation" remains without practical effect since India rules out any third-party intervention or mediation, especially from the United States.

The only way India might be induced to change that view is if the Clinton Administration would agree to "lean on" New Delhi, a course it is most unlikely to adopt. In effect, then, the Clinton mediation offer on Kashmir remains meaningless and it can be safely assumed that nothing will change.

In fact, the US President's reference to the elections India is keen to hold in the state suggests that even if they are partly successful, they will receive Washington's blessings and seal of approval.

Need to End 'Dependency Syndrome' Stressed

BK1404083095 Islamabad THE NATION in English 14 Apr 95 p 6

[Editorial: "Evaluating US mission"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] While Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has yet to return home from her US visit and share with her countrymen the upshot of her highly-publicised mission, a war of words has already begun regarding the success or failure of what the Opposition says has been "the most expensive foreign journey ever undertaken by any Pakistani leader". So intense is the polarisation in our body politic today that no issue can be delinked from the point-scoring agenda, and judgments are passed without any reference to objective realities. The PML-(N) [Pakistan Muslim League - Nawaz] has called Benazir Bhutto's visit a 'complete failure'. The Prime Minister is coming back empty-handed since she has neither secured the release of the F-16s, nor the return of money Pakistan had paid for the deal, the PML stalwarts have said. The ruling party circles, on the other hand, have been hailing the visit as an unprecedented success, a personal triumph for Benazir and a salvaging act for Pakistan's image. Needless to say, the appropriate response would have been to desist from passing hasty judgments and assess the outcome of the visit in the context of the entire gamut of Pakistan-US relations in the post-Cold War era. The success or the failure of the mission is correlated to the expectation level. And if we have any clue of the US grand design since the demise of the Soviet Union, it would be wishful thinking to expect a change of heart in Washington vis-a-vis Pakistan's role in the aftermath of a diplomatic exercise, no matter how forcefully the Pakistani case was projected. Ironically, the Opposition leaders in the country are by and large still stuck with the memory of the good old days when the Americans needed Pakistan as an outpost for a 'crusade against the evil empire', and were more than willing to be generous with money and weapons. The rules of the game for global supremacy have changed since then, and Pakistan does not any longer qualify for the kind of relationship it once had with the US, but unfortunately, the underlying idea behind any attempt to mend fences with the US has been to seek Pakistan's rehabilitation as a beneficiary of US patronage.

Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has been prudent enough not to raise high hopes about the outcome of her US mission, even though she has been making an all-out effort to sell Pakistan as a trustworthy ally. And if the laborious drill she has undertaken to convince the Americans of Pakistan's commitment to shared objectives of democracy and human rights is any basis for acknowledging good work, she deserves credit for forceful advocacy of Pakistan's case for a fair deal. Nonetheless, the American response, notwithstanding promises of finding a way out to help Pakistan, has by no means been a cause for optimism. It is time the policy-planners in Islamabad outgrew the dependency syndrome and stopped looking towards the US as the benevolent patron whose blessings and support must be sought at all costs. And, while it may be necessary as an imperative of the unipolar world to pursue good relations with the US, it would be counter-productive to overdo the job of currying favour with the Americans.

Interest in French Mirage Aircraft Reported

BK1304085495 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 13 Apr 95 p 12

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad—With Pakistan and France regularly holding talks to reach agreement on deals pertaining to the purchase of defence equipment for Pakistan's armed forces. Islamabad has shown interest in purchasing a batch of nine second hand Mirage III/5 half wings and a batch of seven second hand Mirage III E aircraft.

With an inflated price tag, France's Dassault Aviation had submitted a proposal to Pakistan for the sale of nine second hand Mirage III/5 half wings and seven second hand Mirage III E aircraft.

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This subject, according to official sources, had come under discussion in the last meeting of the Pak-French Joint Committee on Armament Collaboration (PFJCAC).

Pakistan had told France that the price quoted should be lowered and the proposals for wings and aircraft be separated. Islamabad has already confirmed its desire to get these pieces of equipment without any intermediary, the sources said.

The sources disclosed that since the nine wings are fully certified and held as operational spares by the French Air Force as such they seem to need no further certification or any other maintenance by Dassault Aviation for wings.

However, said the sources. France has mentioned its difficulty in having direct deal between the French Air Force and Pakistan Air Force [PAF]. "France is looking into the option of direct transfer of Mirage wings to the PAF," added the sources.

In a related development, Pakistan has made a request for France's assistance to get some additional workload for the PAC [Pakistan Aeronautical Complex] Kamra, so as to enable it to profitably utilize its spare capacity and recover its investment and generate funds which could be recycled for purchase of French defence equipment. Pakistan, revealed investigations, has a surplus capacity to undertake workload, and it is interested to act as a vendor for French Companies. A survey of the Kamra industrial facilities had already been carried out with respect to this proposal.

Keeping in view Pakistan's interest and its expectation of receiving free of cost, 3 Atlantic I aircraft retiring from the French Navy, France has assured that it will diligently formulate the best possible proposal for the transfer of the aircraft.

Pakistan was expecting a free of cost offer of 3 Atlantic I retiring from the French Navy. This expectation gained grounds subsequent to the successful finalisation of the Agosta subs contract signed between the two countries last year.

While receiving this expectation with an open mind, France has mentioned to Pakistan that i) the number, as well as delivery schedule, of aircraft available for transfer to Pakistan will depend on the decommissioning plan established by the French Navy; ii) to the France's understanding, these Atlantic I aircraft were to be transferred to Pakistan to be exclusively used as spare parts reservoirs and will, for this reason, leave France with the minimum flying potential necessary for reaching Karachi; and iii) regarding the financial and legal aspects, the French administration will follow the regular channel which will determine the conditions of transfer of the aircraft to Pakistan.

Pakistan and France, said official sources, are also working out the details of training courses for Pakistani military, air force and naval officers in French institutions.

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